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The Adventure Motoring Magazine

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NOVEMBER 2015  
ISSUE NO 139

**New models:** First impression of Audi's luxurious Q7 and the facelifted Isuzu KB  
**Shoot out:** Which one of the most renowned smartphones takes the best photo?  
**Reader's Adventure:** Exploring the Karoo's most beautiful passes in a Chevy  
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**November 2015**

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The Adventure Motoring Magazine

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**PUBLISHED BY** RamsayMedia (PTY) LTD  
 Company registration number: 1934/005460/07

**PRINTED BY CTP PRINTERS** Boompies Street, Parow.  
 Distributed by RNA, 12 Nobel St, Industria West, Johannesburg.

**CAPE TOWN HEAD OFFICE** Uitvlugt, 3 Howard Drive, Pinelands, 7405  
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www.ramsaymedia.co.za



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# Letters

**YOUR OPINION**  
We welcome your views

E-mail your views to [editorial@leisurewheels.com](mailto:editorial@leisurewheels.com) or submit them via our Facebook page or the website at [www.leisurewheels.co.za](http://www.leisurewheels.co.za). We reserve the right to edit and shorten letters. Concise letters will be given preference. Please supply your postal address, in case you win a prize

## The longest road

Having travelled "the longest road" from Archer's Post to Moyale in Kenya, I fully agree with Johan Badenhorst's article in the September edition. It really felt long to us, travelling most of the way in second gear in three vintage Morris Minors.

We were on our way from Port Elizabeth to England to take part in the Minor's 2008 diamond jubilee celebrations. Each car carried two people, spare fuel, oil, water, food, clothes, camping gear, spare parts and tools, bringing ground clearance down to about 145mm.

Archer's Post was our overnight camping stop before we left early the next morning to tackle the 210km to Marsabit. Road conditions, suspension capability and lack of ground clearance kept us in second gear at about 20km/h.

To our surprise, we heard that it had been raining in Marsabit for the past three days and we would encounter mud. Thirty kilometres from Marsabit, we came across a bad patch, which had bogged down two trucks. We had no option but to give it a bash. Miraculously, all three Morris got through at the first attempt.

When we encountered another bogged down truck, we made a detour through swampy grassland. We eventually arrived in Marsabit after a 12-hour journey with one litre of petrol left in the tank of my 1956 four-door Minor.



• Two trucks stuck in the mud but the Minors made it through. • We were forced to take a detour to bypass the muddy patch. • Mark on his knees fixing the bent gearbox mounting while I top-up leaking shocks. • Tricky road conditions.

An early start was made the next day to conquer the 250km to Moyale. Thick, deep mud slowed our progress. Sometimes we had to stop and walk ahead, to select the best path through the mud. Through sheer determination, luck and maybe some nifty driving, none of the cars got stuck.

At 11am we had to stop while nomads herded their camels across the road. This was a good time to stretch our legs. An hour later the 1951 convertible driven by owners Mark and Sheila Masters hit a rock,

which bent the gearbox mounting. While Mark did the panel beating, wife Marilyn made sandwiches and tea.

Phil then realised that his wallet had fallen out of the car when we stopped at the camel crossing. Brian, owner of a 1949 two-door side valve, took Phil back to look for the wallet, but they returned empty handed.

Around 5.30pm, an army 4x4 overtook us and signalled us to stop. Phil was reunited with his fully intact wallet! The herd boy who found the wallet had taken it to his father, who handed it in to the police. The police did not have transport, so they called in the army. The army phoned the border post at Moyale to inform us that the wallet had been found and was on its way, just in case the 4x4 did not catch us in time.

We arrived in Moyale at 11pm, 16 hours after our early morning start.

Johan Badenhorst's last paragraph hits the nail on the head. Our memories of the two days spent on Africa's longest road are very special and now, with the improvement of the road, they can never be repeated or bettered.

Colin Stock, Port Elizabeth

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## Illegible text

May I suggest that your next free offer on taking out a long-term subscription be a

→ pg 10





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## Tracks4Africa SA Traveller's Map

Tracks4Africa has introduced a new range of paper maps for those who prefer to do their travelling the good old-fashioned way.

These maps, which are available for SA, Namibia, Botswana and Mozambique/Malawi, are about one metre wide and feature a scale of 1:1 000 000.

They were designed to be used inside your car by folding open only the sections you need.

These are also the first maps to provide not only the distance but the travel times as well.

The Tracks4Africa paper maps are printed on high quality PolyArt paper which is tear- and water- resistant, making it a perfect material for outdoor use.

Tracks4Africa's paper maps are available at its online store, or at leading retailers countrywide. Each map costs R199.



service I got from Mortimer Motors.

Jimi Paxinos, Bethlehem

## Destructive modifications

Widening the stance of your bakkie so that the wheels run partly outside of the wheel arches/mudguards seems to be all the rage nowadays. For what reason?

Much has been said about the negative effects this modification has on wheel/suspension geometry and the possible consequences for road holding. Many vehicles even look extremely ugly after such a modification – the macho *baberbek* look? To top it all, disgustingly ugly black wheels are purchased at exorbitant costs.

Be that as it may, have these owners ever thought about the effect their ego-inspired modification has on other road users?

On a recent trip to Namibia, I found most drivers to be extremely polite and law abiding, and especially courteous to other road users on dirt roads. That is, except for the driver of a new Ford Ranger (modified as described), going well over 120km/h, hugging centre stage, and spewing stones and chips sideways out of his unprotected wheel arches, showering all others on the road with debris.

I lost two headlight lenses and the windscreen. Who knows how much damage he inflicted on all the other vehicles on the roads that he so vehemently used as his personal test track?

I am sure the driver had no idea of just how destructive his modification was to other road users. Have people ever pondered the consequences of these modifications?

Willie de Klerk, Lichtenburg

magnifying glass?

Why do I recommend this? A quick glance at page 21 of the September edition will show that the top 20% of the page is readable, but the print becomes progressively illegible as one scans down the page, due to white type on a grey and dusty sky in the background picture.

I appreciate the photograph but find that a magnifying glass or a pair of high powered binoculars are needed to read the Kia overland adventure story. Subsequent pages can be found with the same fault.

I would be pleased if this could be addressed in some creative way in future mouth-watering editions.

Rob Minné, Port Elizabeth

*Thanks for your comments, Rob. The reason for this oversight is that we use a different printing process for the page proofs compared with the final product. It tends to print darker, so the problem isn't picked up at that stage. We have taken steps to*

*ensure that it doesn't happen again. – Ed.*

## Good service

I would like to thank the guys at Mortimer Toyota in Bethlehem – Andre, Marius and Christie – for the good service I got from them.

I bought a second hand Land Cruiser 76 S/W 2011, 4,2 diesel with 79 000km on the clock. A short while later the vehicle started using a lot of oil – four litres per 1000km. I went back to them, and was told to do the 80 000km service, which I did.

After another 1 000km, I had to add two more litres of oil. I went back to Mortimer Toyota, and was asked to leave the vehicle in their workshop.

Two weeks later they called me to come and fetch my Cruiser, with a brand new motor! Not a redone motor, mind you, but a brand new one.

I really want to thank these guys and will tell everybody I come across what good



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## Toyota Fortuner saga

I bought a brand new Toyota Fortuner about a year ago. After discovering a number of defects, I contacted Toyota SA for help. The defects were obviously factory issues, as they occurred in all the Fortuners and double cabs I inspected.

I was referred to a dealer and approached Honeydew Toyota. I specifically asked them not to attempt any repairs if that is how the vehicle was made, but I was assured they were highly trained and that they would sort everything out.

What followed was a number of attempts at repairing the obvious defects, causing more problems than they solved.

The vehicle was eventually taken to Toyota SA's repair centre and was returned with exactly the same problems we started with. The problem I have is that the vehicle, as a result of all the work done on the dashboard, has a huge number of rattles! If you would like to have a look for yourself, see the video I made on YouTube ([www.youtube.com/watch?v=GB0XN\\_Mowvs](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GB0XN_Mowvs)).

After the vehicle was returned to me by Toyota SA, a meeting was called attended by the Toyota SA field technician and two representatives of Honeydew Toyota. I expressed my disappointment and pointed out that the vehicle still had the exact same problems I had first complained about.

The funny thing is, they agreed with me. I was offered, as compensation, an extension of my warranty, but I rejected this and asked that they looked at a buy-back arrangement, on the understanding that I purchased a new Fortuner.

They all agreed that this would be the best way forward, and told me they would enter into discussions with the dealership I had bought the vehicle from as well as Honeydew Toyota, and get back to me.

The next day I received a letter stating that my vehicle was within manufacturer specifications and that the matter had been finalised. Toyota has not responded to any of my e-mails since then.

Does anyone have advice for me, please?

**Wihan Oosthuizen, via e-mail**

*We sent your letter to Toyota SA's communications department, who went to work on the matter.*

*According to Toyota SA, "the outcome of the meeting was that the customer had complained about rattles in the vehicle and that he had requested a courtesy vehicle while his vehicle was undergoing repairs".*

*Toyota then sent us a list of the actions it had taken to solve the problem:*

*1. On 17/09/2015, Mr Oosthuizen's vehicle was collected from his premises and a*

*courtesy vehicle as per customer choice (Hilux double cab) was handed over.*

*2. The vehicle is currently undergoing repairs at Monument Toyota Constantia.*

*3. Once the vehicle is repaired and returned to the customer, the customer care department will do a post service experience follow up call to the customer and feedback will be provided.*

*"We'll get in touch with Mr Oosthuizen in the near future to find out whether this matter has been resolved amicably," the statement said.*

## Join the Stoepsitfees

I read your adventure article on Rhodes in a recent edition and thought your readers might be interested in attending our annual Stoepsitfees.

This will be the fourth festival since the first one was held in 2013. Apart from the delights of *stoepsitting*, which include fascinating conversations, tasty snacks and the development of new friendships, a productive pastime unites the participants on the stoeps and under shady trees in the quiet roads of the village.

For instance, all the participants with an interest in knitting, whether experts or beginners, knit 20cm squares from the gaily coloured yarns provided by Saprotex International. These are sewn into blankets, which will be put up for auction at the Rhodes-based Epsom Wild Trout Fly Fishing Festival in March 2016. The proceeds are then used to buy blankets that are given to the needy in Zakhele township.

Bookings for accommodation have already been made by people from as far afield as the UK, who will be attending along with their South African friends. Similar friendships are formed each year. International visitors love the quiet atmosphere at Rhodes, with its constant bird calls, not to mention the interesting local



human population.

A wide variety of stoeps will be open to all participants, with demonstrations and sampling ranging from pottery at the Clay Café, etchings and paintings at the Rhodes Gallery to the cheese factory and brewery at Earlstown.

Woolworks is a group of local ladies who spin and knit the wool from sheep on the farms of the area. They produce a wide variety of garments and toys for all occasions.

Although knitting is an important aspect of the event, there are also other activities that may be of interest, such as joining groups led by experts to see the rich indigenous flora on the mountains, or picnic and swim in the river.

Fly fishing for indigenous wild yellowfish as well as rainbow trout can be enjoyed on more than 200km of river within an hour's drive of Rhodes.

The newly established Bell Park on Main Street has a three-hole chip and putt circuit for golfers.

For more information, phone 045-974-9290 or e-mail:

[contact@rhodestourism.co.za](mailto:contact@rhodestourism.co.za).

**Dave Walker, Rhodes**

➔ pg 12

## New Namibian tour

**Popyeni Safaris and Desert Magic Tours have launched the most scenic, historic and tough route between Lüderitz and Walvis Bay. It takes you along the coastline of the Namib "sand sea", where dunes are extremely technical as well as challenging.**

**All known historic shipwreck sites are visited and 4x4 enthusiasts, as well as nature lovers, are treated to a full bouquet of attractions including spectacular scenery, wildlife, history, as well as a test of 4x4 skills.**

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**Part of the route ventures into unknown territory and involves some dune driving rated 4 to 5 in difficulty, for experienced drivers. For more details and prices, contact Desert Magic Tours at [desertmagic@iway.na](mailto:desertmagic@iway.na) or phone +264 63 202824.**



## What happened to Daihatsu?

I have been reading your magazine for a long time and enjoy every page.

At 73 years old, I am still employed as a fitter and turner.

My first car was a Mini Cooper 948cc and I thoroughly enjoyed it.

In 2006, I purchased a new Mazda MX5 and the only problem was getting into the seat as there was no room left over, with my particular steering position.

In 2007, I purchased a new Chevrolet Lumina V8, but I was disappointed in the car as the brakes and water leaks were a problem, so I sold it and decided to drive only my Daihatsu Coure three cylinder, twin overhead cam 950cc 1998 model.

This car has clocked more than 300 000km with no trouble. I enjoy driving it daily, as it is very economical. I get around 4l/100km at a speed of 130km/h.

I am very disappointed at Daihatsu for not marketing their cars in SA.

If I could purchase a new Daihatsu Coure again today, I would.

Terence Scrooby, via e-mail

*Daihatsu quietly left the SA market a few months ago, Terence. It's a pity, because they made some really nice cars in their heyday. – Ed*

## Aftermarket HID woes

I enjoyed the spotlight shoot-out article in the October edition and look forward to the comparisons of LED technology.

It's fairly well known that Defenders have poor lights, both on main and dipped beam. I tried to improve mine by installing upgraded H4 bulbs. The effect was noticeable, but well short of my Disco's HID lights.

I then decided to fit an aftermarket HID kit for H4 into the reflectors. I chose a mid-range option price-wise and installed as per instructions.

The first issue of note was the bulb hold-

## An X6, not an M6

In the October edition, as a result of an editing error, we referred to our new long-term BMW X6 M50d as an M6. We apologise for the error and any confusion it may have caused.

## Howling Moon's 30-second tent

Howling Moon has introduced a new tent, which it claims can be set up in less than 30 seconds, which should be handy if you have had a long day on the road.

It's called the Wizz and is 2400mm wide, 2000mm high and 2 000mm deep. The tent is made from a polyester/cotton blend of fabric that forms a Ripstop material, with tear resistance and tensile strength.

The tent is coated with fluoro carbon to make it resistant to UV rays and heat degradation, as well as fungal attack. This coating also protects against soilage and water.

The Wizz features a built-in, seam-welded groundsheet made from heavy duty PVC. There are windows at the rear and sides, as well as a veranda extension.

The Wizz costs R5500 and is available from Campworld outlets nationwide.



ers. As H4s have both main and dipped filaments, the HIDs have electromagnets to move the position of the discharge tube for main and dipped beams. They are fitted by using an H4 adapter/insert that was secured by the springs on the reflector. The "bulbs" then push in and rotate to lock in position. The effect was brilliant – a white light with good main beam range.

There was an issue with the dipped beams, caused by the length of the discharge tube with a couple of darker areas, but it was still much better than halogens.

The problems started with off-road driving and badly corrugated roads. First, the right-hand discharge tube failed after about three months. Then I lost both main

and dipped offside lights.

I purchased a replacement of much better quality and fitted it.

I was surprised by the looseness of the old bulb in the adapter. While still locked, it was quite loose and able to wiggle around. I appreciate that the tube is only locked in dip or main when power is applied, but the whole assembly was loose.

After a further three to four months, and driving in the Waterberg on some very corrugated tracks, I noticed that the left-hand beam on main was pointing at oncoming traffic. I again stripped the lights and found the tube to be free floating and not locked in the holder. The right-hand higher quality tube and holder were not affected.

I accept that when replacing single filament bulbs, some of these issues may not arise, but I have to question if this approach is the correct one in terms of improving my Defender's lights? Total replacement of the lens reflector and bulb may be the only way forward, and as these are seven-inch lights, options may be rare as only Jeep and the now terminated Defender have these lights.

I like driving the Defender with the HID option as the vision is vastly superior. However, the reliability of the combination for use on a corrugated road is questionable.

A serious problem for all is the dipped beam performance, not the main beam. Can one effectively use HID LED spots to improve this on public roads without blinding oncoming traffic?

Regarding the Defender, your article on transporting the Word Cup trophy around in a Defender was surprising. Having ceased production, it seems strange to be still marketing it.

I enjoy Leisure Wheels, and get both the print and digital copies.

Alexander Lambert, via e-mail

## No need for sense

I read Johan Badenhorst's article "The real worth of an Arctic Truck" with interest.

I've seen a few of these big wheelers on the road and I was also lucky enough to witness one in action at a 4x4 day recently.

It looked fairly difficult to maneuver through the tight sections and I couldn't help but wonder how easy it would be to snap a vital part in the wheel assembly thanks to the added weight of a massive tyre. I agree completely that it just doesn't make sense to have an Arctic Truck in Africa, especially since standard off-road-ers tend to do such a good job these days. It's just not a practical solution.





My question is, does it really matter? We're human after all, and most of the things we do for fun don't make sense. If you think about it, even off-roading, as an activity, doesn't make sense. You mission into the bushes to climb over obstacles that will likely damage your car. Does it make sense? No. Is it fun? Undoubtedly yes.

I guess Arctic Trucks make sense in the same way a supercar makes sense. It's not that practical, costs an awful lot of money and can't be used as daily transport.

But, you'd still have one if you can afford it. Not all things in life need to make sense.

Gareth Wilson, via e-mail

## World's first wrist multi-tool

Leatherman has unveiled its "industry first" Tread, which can be worn on the wrist. It is crafted from corrosion resistant 17-4 stainless steel links that include two to three functional tools each, making a total of 25 usable features, such as box wrenches and screwdrivers. A version of the Tread bracelet that includes a watch will also be available soon. It will have a Leatherman-designed and Swiss-made timepiece with precision quartz movement. A shock resistant sapphire crystal ensures scratch resistance for heavy-duty wear, and the curved watch limits reflection and increases outdoor visibility. The recommended retail prices are R2700 and R3600 respectively. The watch can be retrofitted to the Tread when it becomes available in SA.



FORECOURT

## Criminals in action

TJ's CCTV cameras have been working overtime, recording an ATM robbery and another from a petrol attendant attempting to get payment with a mobile card machine

**I have had two** incidents recently that I had hoped were a thing of the past.

Firstly, I received a phone call from a bank's fraud department, asking me whether their ATM was covered by any of my CCTV cameras. Two inspectors came round, and observed the incident taking place on a Monday at 11am, in broad daylight with dozens of people walking around.

On the camera we could see a middle-aged man drawing cash from the ATM. While he is busy, a black sedan drives up and parks right next to the entrance. The vehicle has no rear registration number and the front plate has two digits missing. The car is apparently from Durban.

The customer draws R800, leaves the ATM and walks towards his car. At this stage the thief goes to the ATM and calls the customer back just as he reaches his car. Remember, the customer has successfully drawn his money, taken his card and has almost reached his car. What possessed him to return to the ATM and start up a conversation with this guy is beyond me.

The customer can then be seen inserting his card more than four times into the machine while entering his pin code. The thief, meanwhile, is on his tiptoes, looking over the man's shoulder and then goes almost on his knees, peering up at the pin pad.

Then, somehow, the thief manages to

take the customer's ATM card from him and runs to the waiting vehicle, leaving the bewildered man standing at the ATM.

By the time the customer realised that his ATM card was missing, the thief had driven to the next ATM, which is a kilometre away, and drawn R6000.

Actually, I don't have any sympathy for this customer. There have been so many articles and warnings in the media about ATM thefts in the past couple of years. You should never be caught out like this. People really need to wise up and use their common sense in this day and age.

The second incident happened at 1:30am on a Saturday. A purple nondescript car, missing a headlight and front bumper, drives onto the forecourt and the driver asks for R200 in petrol.

The car has two male occupants. The attendant is extremely suspicious of the customers, but pumps the fuel and asks for payment. The driver asks the attendant for the hand-held credit card machine, which the attendant brings over, but holds onto.

In the CCTV footage we could see there was a lot of searching going on for a card with which to make payment. The passenger "finds" the card and asks for the machine. It is then passed into the vehicle for the customer to use, and after the swipe he hands it back to the attendant and a slip can be seen being printed out.

Apparently the slip keeps asking for the correct pin number, and the machine is used again without success. In hindsight, the customers could probably see that the attendant was on high alert and they were trying to waste a lot of time by handing the machine back twice to ease the suspicions of my staff member.

A second staff member is watching this scene play out, and walks over to the car to show support for his friend, who is extremely unhappy with what is going on. At the third attempt by the passenger, the driver can be seen lurching forward and starting the vehicle.

At this stage the attendant is seen gallantly trying to switch off the vehicle and doing his best to pull the key out of the ignition but, unfortunately, the driver gets the car into first gear and starts spinning the vehicle in an attempt to drive off.

Meanwhile, the second attendant grabs a rock and throws it at the car, which is speeding out of the forecourt. The rock hits the windscreen, but this does not stop the thieves from speeding away into the night.

I cannot understand why these card machines are stolen. They contain no information and all sales are downloaded onto a device in my office, but they cost a small fortune to replace – around R7000 each time. It's a total drain on the economy, and my poor insurance company.



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# Is this how to get the desert blooming?

**So, how much** do you know when it comes to Halophytes, Salicornia, the Planck Foundation and the Malthusian Theory? If you are like me, the answer could be covered by one word: nothing!

They say ignorance is bliss, but a simple conversation, followed a few days later by an e-mail that popped up out of the blue, opened up new avenues of thought.

It started with my son and me on a road in Namibia. On the way to Cape Cross we were driving west towards the Atlantic with the eeriness of the landscape something to behold. There were no dunes, just miles and miles of nothing – flat, white desert as far as the eye could see.

My son made the observation that we were close to the sea, and wondered whether there is a way that desolate desert could be turned into lush, crop yielding fields using purified water from the ocean.

Desalination is nothing new, and the largest such plant in SA is in Mossel Bay, the home of PetroSA. The worst drought in 130 years saw the southern Cape declared a disaster area in 2010, and spawned the birth of a desalination

plant 10 times bigger than anything previously built in SA. Veolia Water Solutions and Technologies built and operates a plant that now supplies PetroSA with five mega litres of processed water per day, and Mossel Bay with 10 mega litres per day of water that is suitable for irrigation, bathing and drinking.

A day or two after we returned from Namibia, an e-mail arrived from Gijss Graafland of the Planck Foundation. Google to the rescue, and I discovered that the Max Planck Foundation is a German research institute that “supports fundamental research in the natural, life and social sciences, the arts and humanities”, and has 83 institutes scattered throughout Europe.

The Planck Foundation is no lightweight organisation, and at the end of last year had 33 Nobel Prize winners to its name. The 2014 budget was around 1.6 billion euros, and the society had 17 000 permanent employees including more than 10 000 permanent and freelance scientists.

The gist of Graafland’s e-mail was a request that we “assess the potential of using sea water irrigation and salt water crops for global economic

development”. With 33% of earth’s land mass being deserts, I can see the potential for developing these regions into fertile agricultural land – and this is where the Malthusian Theory comes in.

In 1798, Thomas Malthus wrote an essay on “The Principle of Population”, and argued that “the population tends to increase faster than food supply with inevitably disastrous results, unless the increase in population is checked by moral restraints or by war, famine and disease”. The Malthusian Theory still applies, a few centuries later, to large parts of Africa.

However, the Planck Foundation says Malthusianism “is driven by fear and not by science, innovation and celebration of life”. Planck says Malthusianism ignores the “continuous flow of technological progress by scientific research” and is reactionary.

So what about Halophytes and Salicornia? They are plants that grow in water with high salinity levels or have a salt water tolerance, and can be cultivated as food crops or for industrial purposes and as animal fodder.

Some of the food uses look to be singularly unappetising, but what caught my eye were experimental Salicornia fields in Saudi Arabia, Eritrea and Mexico aimed at the production of biodiesel. The company responsible for the Mexican field claims that between 225 and 250 gallons of diesel can be

produced per hectare, and is pushing for a \$35 million scheme to create a 12 000 acre Salicornia farm.

The Planck Foundation says our entire agricultural system is based on only 2.75% of earth’s water resources. We have “bet too heavily on the wrong water card in global agriculture”, and could take a giant leap forward by developing salt water crops.

A lot of what the Planck advocates makes scientific sense and, from an African perspective, there is exciting potential. Whether the recommendations put forward by their research are economically viable is another question.

The cost of the Mossel Bay desalination plant was R210 million, and that was back in 2010. I am not even going to hazard a guess at the cost of irrigating large tracts of desert to grow plants that are salt water friendly, but perhaps there are opportunities for governments and enterprising entrepreneurs.

I am wondering why Planck would single out Leisure Wheels with a deluge of scientific research and proposals that could have gone to government departments good at spending our money. I am also not sure that merging “a global ecologic and biodiversity revival” would stop migration problems, solve food and energy issues and end regional conflicts. **LW**

## OUR OPINION

Jannie Herbst **Editor**  
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# Smartphones dumbing us down



## OUR OPINION

**Gerhard Horn** Features Editor  
gerhard@leisurewheels.com

**Smartphones are probably** one of the ten best inventions of the modern age. Not only do you have the world in your pocket, but these relatively small objects have replaced a number of other things we used to carry around wherever we went.

I have an iPhone and I adore it. It's my phone, watch, bank, camera and entertainment system all rolled into one. It reminds me where I need to be and it shows me how to get wherever I'm going if I haven't been there before. It also allows me to have a video conversation with my loved ones, even when I'm halfway across the world.

Unfortunately, the smartphone does have one massive flaw – it's addictive. I've been travelling a fair amount recently and I'm amazed at the smartphone related rituals people go through when they arrive at a new destination.

I like to take it all in before I take

a picture to show my wife, but that's about it. The global trend, it seems, is to arrive, take a picture, check in on Facebook, tweet something and only then settle down and enjoy the view.

I don't really have a problem with that part. It's a cultural trend, which means most people must enjoy it, so that's fine in my book.

I do, however, have a problem with people whose addiction is so bad that they can't go five minutes without checking their Facebook page. It's fine if you are at work or at home, but not when your car is in front of mine and the traffic light has turned green. This happens to me at least once a day, and it's infuriating. I'm a pacifist by nature, but there are days when I can see myself grabbing someone's phone from their hands and chucking it as far as I can.

It's fairly easy to spot someone who is driving and tweeting at the same time. They are usually swerving

from one side of the lane to the other, mostly because their eyes are on the road for only half the time they should be. Drive past them and you will see them looking down into their lap to see who has checked in where. I wonder if a person like this would tweet a picture of their fender bender once it inevitably happens?

Actually, I know the answer to that one. A while ago I nearly choked on my lunch while laughing at the most epic social media sequence I've ever seen.

Someone in the US bought a Range Rover Sport and announced his acquisition on social media with something on the lines of "I've got four-wheel drive. Can't stop me. LOL." The photograph above the caption was of an ice-covered road...

A few hours later the same guy posted a photograph of a wrecked Range Rover with the caption "Lost control and totalled my car." The first post received 165 likes, and the second one with the mangled Range Rover got 167.

It was hilarious, but only because the driver didn't get hurt. I can only hope that he learned a valuable lesson from that experience.

Unfortunately, it seems as if millions

of people still don't know about the dangers of using phones while driving, or simply ignore them.

US service provider AT&T recently released a study that made alarming reading. Seven out of ten people use their mobile phones while driving. Of these, 61% send SMSs and 33% respond to e-mails. A shocking 27% check Facebook, and 14% admit to tweeting. The scariest statistic of all is that 17% of respondents confessed to taking a selfie while driving.

Luckily, there's an app for this. I've checked the Apple store and it has a few apps that shut down your ability to SMS, tweet and update while the car is moving. I'm still allowed to take calls, but only via Bluetooth streaming. Or, if your car doesn't have Bluetooth, you can just put the phone out of reach, on silent, or shut it down completely.

The research shows that people check their smartphones simply because they are within reach. If the phone is out of sight it's out of mind and you can get on with the business of driving when the robot turns green. If not, that might just be me in the car behind you, and I've been looking for a smartphone that I can throw into the middle of next week! **LW**

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# Sprinkaan at Augrabies



After spotting an old Land Cruiser for sale recently, Izak Breytenbach recalled an interesting encounter with this iconic vehicle a few years ago

**I recently drove** past a venerable old Toyota Land Cruiser parked next to the road. Displayed in the windscreen was a large “For Sale” sign, marking a sad day in the vehicle’s life. The sight of the old Cruiser as I paused at a red traffic light brought back some fond memories...

In 2012 a client asked me to do an urgent project on a farm near Augrabies. Such was the haste that I flew to Upington and hired a car to get to the farm. The agreement was that the client would supply a suitable vehicle for me to use on site, which constituted a mixture of untouched Karoo and Namaqualand, along with the odd sunbathing adder.

Upon arrival in the late afternoon, I was presented with a dapper mid-seventies model Toyota Land Cruiser. It had been restored at some point and was adorned with a shiny white coat of paint. It was now a farm runabout, doubling as a game drive vehicle on the odd occasion. To my surprise, there was only about 167 000km on the clock after nearly four decades. Nevertheless, I was handed the keys and set to start at dawn the following morning.

The first day of site reconnaissance commenced with rudimentary instructions on how to start the Land Cruiser. I have often heard people referring to the original VW Beetle as “temperamental”, but compared with this Land Cruiser, a Beetle was a paragon of virtue.

The Land Cruiser’s starting

sequence was very specific. Tap the accelerator twice and then crank the starter once. Tap the accelerator three times, and then crank the starter once. Finally, pull out the choke and crank the starter once more. If this sequence was followed in a correct and flawless manner, you were rewarded with the welcome sound of the engine coming to life... under protest, mind you. Failing to complete the sequence perfectly would result in the carburettor flooding, and you would be left admiring your surroundings for some time.

The scenario reminded me very much of a certain lady I very much fancied during my high school days. Wooing her in the correct manner would reward you only with a forced and lackadaisical response; failing to woo her at all left you with a taciturn expression and a complete failure to acknowledge your existence. I therefore immediately named the Land Cruiser after said lady.

Setting out on the 18km gravel road to the site entrance, I discovered that the Cruiser had a peculiar safety amenity, which has not yet been implemented on modern cars. Of the four drum brakes, only the front left one worked well (or at all), so the vehicle would automatically swerve if you braked hard. The same road also revealed why the vehicle had so few kilometres registered on the odometer. As with many older vehicles, the 100m interval dial of

the analogue odometer was coloured red (as opposed to the remaining black and white dials). The red dial would increase from 2 (i.e. 200m) to 6 (600m), at which point the rate of revolutions would slow. At 7 (700m), the dial started to reverse, winding backwards to 2 before commencing the same sequence again. As a result, the remaining dials remained stationary and no more kilometres were registered.

A few days later, one of my sub-contractors arrived on site along with two of his assistants. They recognised me, but were surprised that I was not driving my usual vehicle. One assistant asked why I was driving “*die sprinkaan*” (the grasshopper). The reference seemed apt and the name struck a chord, so the Land Cruiser was renamed.

The project proceeded to its last day and with the final few hours of site work approaching, a thunderstorm was brewing over the Orange River valley adjacent to the farm. Coming from the Highveld, I was not perturbed as I am accustomed to thunderstorms and so we carried on working, completing our task just as the first raindrops reached the parched earth.

With all the equipment stowed, we vacated the site. However, *die sprinkaan* had only one windscreen wiper and it was fitted to the passenger side. I soaked up a substantial number of raindrops while fitting the wiper arm and blade to the driver’s side.

**Failing to complete the sequence perfectly would result in the carburettor flooding, and you would be left admiring your surroundings for some time.**

Upon arrival back at the farmstead, we found that all the farm workers had taken shelter from the seemingly apocalyptic shower, which ultimately amounted to 18mm (or roughly one third of their annual rainfall).

...The traffic light changed to green and I set off past the Land Cruiser parked next to the road, still thinking about *die sprinkaan*. Surely by now its red odometer dial must be somewhere between 2 and 6, assuming that the starting sequence had been performed impeccably and the auto-swerve feature had allowed the driver to evade any antelope wandering across the gravel road. **LW**

## About the Author

Izak Breytenbach travels large parts of South Africa in the line of consulting. From cities to rural villages and Karoo farms, he enjoys all manners of site work and loves the outdoors.





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# The best made BETTER

**On a recent** episode of QI, a BBC show in which Stephen Fry and four guests discuss various curious facts, the very existence of a fact was brought into question. Is a “fact” indeed a fact, and can anything be considered the absolute truth?

According to research, there is no such thing as a fact. As the planet’s scientists, accountants, philosophers and writers go about their business, they are constantly updating a metaphorical database of human knowledge, so much so that most of what you know today will probably be considered untrue ten years from now.

Hundreds of years ago, it was widely accepted that the earth was flat. Other “facts” that have been disproved over the years include that sunflowers follow the sun, that humans have only five senses and, probably the most significant of them all, that we use only 10% of our brain’s ability at any given moment.

One other “fact” that has been put to rest recently is that Toyota is the undisputed leader in the South African sales charts. If you had asked us two years ago whether we thought the Hilux would ever be trumped, the answer would have been no. The Toyota was “and always will be” the market leader – fact. We never thought we’d see the day when another vehicle would surpass it, but Ford has proved us wrong.

The Ranger is the first of the next-generation bakkies to find its way to SA. It’s currently the sales leader, and we don’t see that changing any time soon

**Text:** Gerhard Horn



The Ranger has outsold the Hilux for a few months, but that's actually not the big news about the sales figures. The inclusion of so-called "workhorses" in the final figures shows that the Ranger is the most popular bakkie in SA, but its victory in the passenger car market is even more impressive. In our buyer's guide, we publish figures only for double and extended cab models, as they are the models most likely to be used as weekday runabouts and "weekend warriors".

In June this year, Ford sold 1728 double and extended cabs, while Toyota sold 1370. The people had spoken and proclaimed the Ranger as their champion.

How did this happen? Well, the easy answer is that the Ranger is just that good. When Ford was designing it, the company must have identified the most important attributes of double cab bakkies and the vehicles that set the standards. It started with a clean slate and matched, or improved on, every single one of those attributes.

Things are set to get even better for

Ford, because the new Ranger has just been launched in SA. We say new, because the term, facelift, simply wouldn't do it justice. It's not all new from the ground up, but definitely enough of an upgrade to be considered new rather than the subject of some minor cosmetic surgery.

We've seen it in the flesh several times now, and it works. Unlike so many other facelifts, the differences between the previous model are immediately apparent. The Ranger now boasts a muscular bonnet, trapezoidal grille and new headlamps.

"When you look at the way our customers use their vehicles, it's important that a Ranger looks and functions as a tough, dependable tool," says Dave Dewitt, exterior design manager, Ford Asia Pacific. "We saw an opportunity to give the design extra tension, and to emphasise 'Built Ford Tough' design elements like the outboard nostrils – all the while maintaining the Ranger's excellent aerodynamic characteristics."

While the exterior is undoubtedly rugged, the

interior is anything but that. The centre console houses a new eight-inch touch-screen display and there's an all-new dual TFT instrument cluster, which provides the driver with all the vital vehicle information at a glance.

To ensure maximum ease of use, the new Ranger comes with Sync 2, which is the latest version of Ford's in-car connectivity system. It can be controlled via the touch-screen, which also has colour-coded corners for easy navigation, or by using voice commands.

There is an array of technologies to help the driver, and a 240-volt socket that can be used to power a laptop computer.

From a safety point of view, the Ranger is in a class of one. To date, it's the only double cab bakkie to be awarded five stars by Euro NCAP, adding to the previous model's already impressive safety credentials.

New safety features include a number of firsts in the bakkie segment, such as "lane keep alert" and a system that will lightly escort you back in line when no action is taken by the driver.





## NEW MODELS

### FORD RANGER



The Ranger is the perfect car for adventurous families. It has a 1040kg payload capacity, which is more than enough for two bikes. It also has a maximum towing capability of 3500kg.

There's adaptive cruise control, which uses radar sensors to maintain a pre-set speed and distance from the car in front. It will alert you when the distance between vehicles becomes unsafe.

Other devices include park assist, tyre pressure monitoring, electronic stability control and a "driver impairment monitor", which warns you if it detects that you are becoming drowsy behind the wheel.

As if that's not enough, Ford has included Hill Launch Assist to help you start on a slope, in forward or reverse; Hill Descent Control, which uses the traction control

system to help you descend steep slopes at a constant speed; Adaptive Load Control, which adjusts the electronic stability control system based on vehicle load; and Emergency Brake Assistance, which provides additional pressure to the brake system when you apply the brakes quickly in an emergency situation.

The four powertrains from the previous model have been carried over, with a few minor improvements.

The 2,5-litre four-cylinder petrol engine soldiers on, with 122kW and 225Nm of torque. The 2,2-litre engine, offered in two states of tune, is claimed to offer more

refinement and improved fuel efficiency. The high-efficiency 96kW model boasts a 22% improvement in fuel consumption, while the high-output engine's figures have jumped to 118kW and 385Nm of torque.

The 3,2-litre five-cylinder Durateq TDCi engine produces the same 147kW and 470Nm output as before, but Ford claims that fuel efficiency has been improved by 18%, partly because of an updated exhaust gas recirculation system. Both six-speed automatic and six-speed manual transmissions are available.

Maximising the efficiency of its engines, the new Ranger is available with automatic start/stop technology, which saves fuel by shutting off the engine when the vehicle is idling. This is claimed to improve fuel economy by up to 3.5%. On the move, a longer final drive ratio boosts fuel economy at highway speeds.

Off-road enthusiasts will be happy to hear that the Ranger is still very much a proper 4x4. Thanks to a 28-degree approach angle and 25-degree departure angle, 230mm of ground clearance and a wading depth of 800mm, there's very little that will stand in the way of this bakkie.

The 4x4 models have an electronically controlled transfer case, which allows the driver to shift on the fly from 4x2 to 4x4 high. For low-speed torque or additional downhill braking, drivers can also engage low-range 4x4 gearing, while an electronic locking rear differential helps to improve traction in difficult conditions. These off-road strengths are matched by towing capability of up to 3,500 kg for the boat owners out there.

#### Pricing

The pricing and specification details for the various models weren't available at the time of going to print, but all the information will be up on our website by the time you read this. Please visit [www.leisurewheels.co.za](http://www.leisurewheels.co.za) for a model by model breakdown.







The changes to the interior are just as extensive as the exterior upgrades. The centre console houses an all-new eight-inch touchscreen display, with the latest Ford Sync 2 infotainment system.

The Wildtrak model remains the flagship of the line-up and as such, features a number of exterior and interior extras. The grille, side mirrors, door handles, side air vents, bed rails and tail lamps are finished in a darker metallic grey. The Wildtrak also comes with rectangular fog lamps and a set of model-specific 18-inch alloy wheels.

Naturally, no Wildtrak would be complete without a few graphics on the bodywork and

that special orange colour, which has been tweaked slightly to make it stand out even more. The Wildtrak is also available in Cool White, Black Mica, Aluminum Metallic and Metropolitan Grey.

Inside, orange is used extensively “to create a sporty atmosphere”.

The Wildtrak has special seats, including an eight-way power adjustable driver’s seat, with bold graphic elements and orange stitching

that combines toughness, durability and sportiness.

“From a design standpoint, everything on the new Wildtrak is very tough, inspired by tools and machinery,” says Dewitt. “But the execution – the dark environment, the soft instrument panel top and the orange stitching punching through – is very modern and more like what you’d see in a top-end hot hatch. It’s tough, but it’s refined and sporty.”



The Wildtrak continues its role as the halo Ranger model. Ford says it uses orange inside to create a sporty atmosphere. It also has special seats, including eight-way power adjustment for the driver’s seat.





## NEW MODELS

### FORD RANGER



The Ranger has a braked towing capacity of 3500kg, which should make little work of a small to medium sized boat.

## Ranger to take on Africa

The new Ford Ranger may be the undisputed champion of SA, but it's a different story once you venture over the border, where other manufacturers have dominated by making parts easily available. Ford hopes to remedy this by expanding further into Africa, starting with an assembly line for the Ranger in Nigeria.

Nigeria will be the first African country outside of SA where Ford vehicles are

produced. Assembly will begin in Ikeja, in Lagos State about 750km south-west of the capital, Abuja. Ford is partnering with dealer group Coscharis Motors in the project.

"Assembling Ranger trucks in Africa's largest economy is an important milestone in our Middle East and Africa growth plan," said Jim Benintende, Ford president for the region. "We have the right partner in Coscharis, and



The front of the standard Ranger is definitely more aggressive than the model it replaces.

a world-class truck that Nigerian customers want and value."

Ford will assemble the Ranger using parts and components imported from SA. The new plant will create 180 jobs, directly and indirectly.

The plant has the capacity to assemble 5000 units annually. All of them will be for the Nigerian market only.

"Nigeria is a priority market for us in sub-Saharan Africa," said Jeff Nemeth, president and CEO of Ford in sub-Saharan Africa. "This move will allow us to better serve our customers, both from a retail point of view and in terms of vehicle and parts availability.

"We are committed to supporting Nigeria's developing automotive industry and economy together with Coscharis, and are looking forward to being active in the community. New assembly operations, even on a small scale like this one, have very positive ripple effects in the local economy and work force."



**Ford's bakkie-based SUV** was a decent enough off-roader, but in terms of almost everything else, it was left struggling against its main competitors. Ford hopes to gain traction in this particular segment again with the introduction of the new Everest, which has been designed to be tough and luxurious in equal measure.

The new Ford Everest has an advanced Terrain Management System with four settings, including normal, snow/gravel/grass, sand and rock. These driving settings alter the throttle response, transmission, four-wheel drive system and traction control to optimise the traction on any surface. For extreme off-road environments, drivers can manually lock the transfer case in low-range four-wheel drive mode, for increased control.

Together with an intelligent four-wheel drive system, an active transfer case with "torque on demand" and ground clearance of 225mm and water-wading capability of 800mm, the Everest helps drivers navigate difficult terrain with ease.

Ford also wants the Everest to be handy on tar, so it has coil springs front and rear and a Watt's linkage on the rear axle. The company says this provides a comfortable, stable ride with "agile and predictable handling".

In the cabin, the Everest boasts the new Sync 2 system, which is said to recognise 10 000 voice commands to control the car's infotainment system, climate control and connected devices, like a smartphone. The Sync 2 system can also be operated via an eight-inch touch-screen display, housed in the centre console. The entertainment system features a top-end 10-speaker sound system with an integrated subwoofer.

Space shouldn't be a problem, thanks to a seven-seat arrangement and no less than 30 stowage spaces. On the high-spec Everest Limited, the third-row seats have a power-fold function, a powered tailgate and an optional dual-panel "moon roof".

Driver and passenger safety is taken care of



# Ford's new Everest is here

Not content with excelling in the double-cab bakkie market, Ford has introduced an all-new Everest in SA

by a host of technologies. For instance, Curve Control is designed to help errant drivers maintain control if they approach a turn too quickly. Other active safety systems include blind spot monitoring and cross traffic alert on the Limited model.

And that's not all. Other advanced features include Roll Stability Control and an Electronic Stability program that works with traction control to help the driver.

Active Park Assist on the all-new Everest Limited enables drivers to parallel park hands-free, requiring only accelerating, gear shifting and braking from the driver.

If the worst does happen, and you are involved in a collision, your family will be

protected by a strong passenger cell and seven airbags.

The Everest is powered by the same 3,2-litre turbocharged five-cylinder diesel engine as the Ranger. Output is rated at 147kW and 470Nm of torque.

The engine is mated to a six-speed automatic transmission, which comes with a sport mode for brisk acceleration and a manual mode for improved control.

Two models are currently available in SA, starting off with the 3,2 Auto 4x4 XLT, which has features such as the Terrain Management System, cruise control, rear park assist and a rear view camera. This model has 18-inch alloys, running boards and retails for **R593 900**.

The flagship Limited model's features include power-fold third row seats, the powered tailgate and an innovative list of safety features, including Active Park Assist, Adaptive Cruise Control, Tyre Pressure Monitoring and Lane Keep Assist. It retails for **R646 900**.

Exterior enhancements include 20-inch alloy wheels, high intensity discharge (HID) headlamps and LED daytime running lights. **LW**



As this magazine went to the printers, we took delivery of a new Everest and set off on an epic adventure to Namibia. Check back in next month for an assessment of the new vehicle and to see how it coped with the Namibian landscape.



## SHOOT OUT

MERCEDES-BENZ GLE COUPÉ VS BMW X6



IS THE PREFERRED FUEL  
USED BY LEISURE WHEELS

# Customer is the winner

BMW has dominated the SUV coupé segment for nearly a decade, mostly because there was no direct competitor to the X6. With the introduction of the GLE Coupé, Mercedes-Benz hopes to change that

**Text:** Gerhard Horn **Photography:** Jannie Herbst





**The recent Frankfurt** Motor Show was a clear indication that the planet is currently in love with the idea of owning an SUV.

It's a strange trend, but being a publication that focuses on leisure vehicles, we don't mind even a little bit. And it's a win-win situation for the consumer as well, as more kinds of SUVs mean more choice and a bigger chance of getting exactly what you want.

Want a fast British crossover? Wait a few months and get a Jaguar F-Pace. Don't like the idea of a British car? Get any one of the numerous Japanese SUVs. Want a large SUV that will survive a trip from SA to Egypt? Check out the Infiniti QX80, or a Toyota Land Cruiser. In the market for a small French crossover with a topbox and Tupperware stuck to the side? Look no further than the Citroën C4 Cactus.

There is one segment that has been getting an awful lot of negative press since its inception, and that's the BMW X6 segment, or the SUV coupé segment, as it's now referred to since Mercedes-Benz launched a competitor.

The X6 had a hard time when it first saw the light of day. The recession had just started, which made it look grandiose and unnecessary. Back then it seemed as if the X6 had been revealed to a world that didn't want it, but nothing could be further from the truth.

BMW sold thousands, which eventually led to a second-generation model. This mostly dispelled the myth that the world could do without such things, but there are still some people who cry foul whenever they see one.

We have a X6 M50d in our long-term fleet and have to admit that we weren't entirely sure if it made any sense. Surely an X5 is all the car you'd ever need, and why would you spend more money on what is basically an X5 that's slightly more impractical?

Living with the BMW has been an eye opener. Yes, it's slightly less practical than an X5, but it just doesn't matter. That's like saying an Airbus is larger than a Boeing 737. Sure, it is, but the Boeing is still a massive plane.

I'll admit that rear headroom is probably the largest sacrifice one has to make when buying an X6, but so far we haven't received a single complaint from a passenger about that particular department.

It's a sensational car and a joy to live with. It's fast yet economical. It has loads of space and it's as comfortable as its price tag suggests.

Our only gripe has nothing to do with the car itself, but rather the kind of attention it attracts. You get the odd motoring enthusiast who nods in approval and we welcome that kind of interest, but it also seems that the Beemer has some sort of boy racer beacon implanted in its handsome body. Guys in hot hatches constantly challenge us at the traffic lights, but we don't respond to



The BMW X6 is much better at this sort of thing than you'd expect.

such foolishness. The X6 M50d reaches the 100km/h mark in 5,3 seconds (as tested by *Car* magazine) and knowing that it's faster than most hot hatches is good enough for us.

The X6 has nothing to prove. It's the product of a company that has spent years building ultimate driving machines.

Enter the Mercedes-Benz GLE coupé. It is Merc's cheeky attempt at getting in on BMW's SUV coupé action. We say "cheeky" because there's no doubt about what Mercedes was after when it designed this car. The front and rear ends are different, but if you placed a silhouette of these cars next to each other, it would be quite difficult to tell them apart.

A shoot-out between these two vehicles was inevitable but, unfortunately, we could only get our hands on a GLE 350d, which is no match for the 50d in the power stakes. The M50d is meant to slot in below the X6M, to give BMW customers the option of buying a less manic machine, better suited to the day-to-day grind. Mercedes also offers a model like this. It's called the 450 AMG, but it's powered by a turbocharged petrol engine.

The GLE 350d was simply too slow to keep up with the M50d, but after a quick stint behind the wheel we decided to do this shoot-out anyway. Yes, it seems mad, but it will (hopefully) make more sense as we go along.

If nothing else, these two cars represent

the most powerful diesel powertrains within their model line-ups in SA. In fact, in the case of Mercedes, it's the only diesel engine. It's also an opportunity to see how the GLE Coupé stacks up against the X6 in terms of space, comfort, luxury and everyday usability.

### BMW X6 M50d

The BMW is a magnificent example of how far diesel engines have come in the last 20 years, but that's not really surprising. BMW arguably started the whole diesel revolution early in the millennium with its 320d, which was the first mainstream oil-burner that made people sit up and take notice.

The 3,0-litre tri-turbo unit in the 50d will probably be remembered as an engine that took things one step further. The 320d proved that diesel was a viable alternative to petrol for daily use, while the 50d shows that a diesel powertrain can deliver white-knuckle levels of performance.

Just look at the figures: 280kW and 740Nm of torque. That massive dose of adrenaline inducing torque is just 10Nm shy of the X6M and is available from 2000rpm. This would be the most impressive figure related to this car if it weren't for the fuel consumption figure of just 7,9l/100km. We achieved this impressive figure by using the "eco-pro" driving mode, which optimises the car for frugal driving but



The Mercedes' front-end grip is impressive.

# SHOOT OUT

## MERCEDES-BENZ GLE COUPÉ VS BMW X6



### BMW X6 M50D

#### ENGINE

|              |                                  |
|--------------|----------------------------------|
| Type         | Six-cylinder turbocharged diesel |
| Displacement | 2993cc                           |
| Max power    | 280 kW@4000 r/min                |
| Max torque   | 740 Nm@2000 r/min                |

#### CHASSIS AND BODY

|                |                               |
|----------------|-------------------------------|
| Layout         | Front engine, all-wheel drive |
| Brakes front   | Disc brakes                   |
| Brakes rear    | Disc brakes                   |
| ABS/EBD        | Yes/Yes                       |
| Alloy size     | 19-inch                       |
| Tyres          | 255/50 R19                    |
| Spare tyre     | Full size                     |
| Steering       | Power assisted                |
| Turning circle | 12,8m                         |

#### SUSPENSION

|       |  |
|-------|--|
| Front | Double track control arm with M-specific damping and suspension tuning |
| Rear  | Integral-IV rear axle with M-specific damping and suspension tuning    |

#### DRIVETRAIN

|                            |                       |
|----------------------------|-----------------------|
| Transmission type          | Eight-speed automatic |
| Traction/stability control | Yes/Yes               |
| Differential lock          | No                    |
| Full-time 4WD              | Yes                   |

#### DIMENSIONS

|                            |            |
|----------------------------|------------|
| Vehicle weight             | 2260kg     |
| Length                     | 4 909mm    |
| Width                      | 1 989mm    |
| Height                     | 1 702mm    |
| Wheelbase                  | 2 933mm    |
| Track front                | 1 640mm    |
| Track rear                 | 1 700mm    |
| Luggage capacity           | 580 litres |
| Towing capacity (unbraked) | 750kg      |
| Towing capacity (braked)   | 2700kg     |
| Ground clearance           | 212mm      |

#### CLAIMED PERFORMANCE

|                          |                      |
|--------------------------|----------------------|
| Top speed                | 250km/h              |
| Overall fuel consumption | 6,6l/100km (claimed) |
| Fuel tank size           | 85 litres            |
| Estimated tank range     | 1280km               |

#### NEED TO KNOW

|                  |                     |
|------------------|---------------------|
| Price            | R1 385 540          |
| Price as tested  | Around R1,5 million |
| Maintenance plan | Five-year/100 000km |

still gives you all that power when you need it.

As for comfort and luxury, it's top notch – but it comes at a price. The standard car is pretty well equipped, but our particular long-term arrived with a massive list of optional extras that took the base price of R1,3 million up to R1,5 million. At least at that price you get every conceivable luxury, including night vision, the best leather seats money can buy and an infotainment system that does everything, including provide access to thousands of satellite radio stations.

As a driving tool it's brilliant. The various driving modes allow you to select just what kind of car you want the 50d to be, and the inclusion of a sportier suspension set-up compared to other X6 models makes this car an utter joy on a fun piece of tarmac. It's not as sharp as the X6M, but in our opinion it represents a better compromise. The comfort mode is truly comfortable, while Sport+ really does make you feel as though you are starring in your own *Fast & Furious* movie.

### Mercedes GLE 350d 4Matic

The oddly camouflaged GLE we had on test also came with an optional sportier suspension, which made the comparison between the two models much easier. While the GLE definitely can't outdo the BMW in the power stakes, it can at least keep up with it in terms of driving pleasure. It's also worth considering that power isn't everything. In our recent performance SUV shoot-out, the Audi SQ5 came third, despite being one of the least powerful cars there. A proper performance vehicle is about more than just massive amounts of power.

The GLE 350d is not a slow car – it's just not as fast as the BMW. With 190kW and 620Nm on tap, it has more than enough get-up-and-go to show most hot hatches a clean pair of heels. Interestingly, it also sounds better than the BMW when you're driving it hard. As enthusiasts will know, this is a big part of the

performance car experience.

The 350d is the cheapest way to get yourself into a GLE coupé, but on the inside it certainly doesn't feel that way. The materials are top drawer stuff and easily match those in the BMW.

In terms of refinement and equipment, there's no real difference between the two cars. You even operate the infotainment systems in the same way. BMW gives you a circular dial with a touch pad, while Mercedes gives you a palm-hugging thingamajig, also with touch and swipe functions. We found the system in the BMW easier to use, but this might just be because we are used to it by now. Given enough time, we would surely find the Mercedes operation just as easy to understand.

There's no point in commenting on the standard equipment in the Mercedes because, as is the case with the Beemer, Mercedes gives you everything you could ever need, and there's a massive list of options you can choose from.

Apart from the sportier suspension and a few odd things here and there, our test GLE was fairly standard. It's worth mentioning that we didn't miss any of the fancy technology we've grown accustomed to in the BMW, apart from the night vision. This system has received some flack in the UK, mostly from hacks wondering about its relevance, but in a country where load-shedding, drunk pedestrians and criminals hiding in dark corners are a reality, we see no reason why you shouldn't tick that particular box.

As a driving machine, the GLE is as good as the BMW, which may come as a surprise to some...

We won't be scoring these vehicles out of five as we usually do, because it isn't strictly a model vs model comparison.

### On the road

This is where these two vehicles will inevitably spend most of their time and both will



The side profile of the BMW shows how imposing it can be on the road. Those muscular side flanks help it look fast, even when it's cruising at 50km/h.



undoubtedly be a joy to those who drive them.

The BMW is able to carve through corners in a way that beggars belief. It is sharp, delicate and brutal at the same time. At this point you'd probably expect us to say that the Mercedes Benz is very good but can't quite match the delicacy of a BMW-prepared SUV. This used to be the case, across both the German marques' line-up. BMW would come up with a new model and Mercedes would follow. The Mercedes would be just as quick, but lack the "scalpel-like" qualities of the BMW.

If anything, the Mercedes is the sportier one here. Its comfort mode feels very much like the sport mode set-up in the BMW – willing, aggressive and firm enough to let you know what's going on underneath, but not so much that it spoils the ride.

Comfort mode in the BMW is just that. It shifts through its eight-speed gearbox imperceptibly, but is always ready and willing to give you all that power if and when you ask for it.

In their sportiest settings, the BMW is the bigger hooligan of the two, but the Mercedes isn't far behind. Neither is better than the other, but they were definitely built with two very different drivers in mind. When you put the BMW in Sport+ mode, it almost feels as though it's egging you on to drive like a spanner. The display behind the steering wheel lets you know that the electronic nannies have been shut off to some extent. It allows you to have some fun, but intervenes just before you end up killing yourself. It feels as though this drive mode was designed by someone who knows that driving fun doesn't necessarily have a lot to do with outright speed.

The Mercedes, on the other hand, is very serious when you dial it to its sportiest setting. It virtually eliminates the turbo lag you feel in comfort mode and even goes as far as blipping the throttle when it shifts down. This might make sense in a V8 AMG, which makes an almighty burble when it does the same, but in a diesel model it just sounds ridiculous.

These vehicles can be driven like sports cars, but in our view they work better as grand tourers, where comfort definitely is a factor. Both can hammer along at highly illegal speeds in the utmost comfort, and that's where they really shine. If you want to go drifting on a wet road, buy a Z4 or an SLK, but if you want to cruise at high speed in comfort with loads of luggage and without stopping for fuel every 300km, one of these vehicles might be the car for you.

That's also the main argument for their existence. Don't think of them as less practical SUVs, but rather as sports cars that are a lot more practical.

### In the dirt

Mercedes-Benz made quite a big noise about its GLE being as capable off-road as it is on it. At the vehicle's local introduction, Merc allowed journalists to drive its multi-million rand fleet through a muddy forest. It seemed like an odd thing to do, but the GLEs, including the mighty 63 AMG models, made it through without a problem.

The general consensus was that the X6 would never be able to do that sort of thing, but having a long-term X6 at the office, we knew this wasn't true.

The X6 certainly doesn't look as though it would be able to cope on anything but tar. It has low-profile rubber and, unlike the Mercedes, cannot raise or lower its suspension to handle rougher terrain.

The recent roadworks on the N14 have, however, forced us to reconsider the way we drive to work. We found a route via Kruispaaie, which is a charming little place where they haven't yet heard of tar. This meant that the commute now consisted of 70% gravel driving and 30% tar.

By the time the GLE arrived, the X6 had already spent more than 500km on the washboard gravel, which was probably more than any other X6 in history.



### MERCEDES-BENZ GLE 350D COUPÉ

#### ENGINE

|              |                                  |
|--------------|----------------------------------|
| Type         | Six-cylinder turbocharged diesel |
| Displacement | 2987cc                           |
| Max power    | 190 kW@3400 r/min                |
| Max torque   | 620 Nm@1600 r/min                |

#### CHASSIS AND BODY

|                |                               |
|----------------|-------------------------------|
| Layout         | Front engine, all-wheel drive |
| Brakes front   | Disc brakes                   |
| Brakes rear    | Disc brakes                   |
| ABS/EBD        | Yes/Yes                       |
| Alloy size     | 20-inch                       |
| Tyres          | 275/50 R20                    |
| Spare tyre     | Tyre sealant                  |
| Steering       | Power assisted                |
| Turning circle | 11,8m                         |

#### SUSPENSION

|       |                        |
|-------|------------------------|
| Front | Independent suspension |
| Rear  | Independent suspension |

#### DRIVETRAIN

|                            |                      |
|----------------------------|----------------------|
| Transmission type          | Nine-speed automatic |
| Traction/stability control | Yes/Yes              |
| Differential lock          | No                   |
| Full-time 4WD              | Yes                  |

#### DIMENSIONS

|                            |                                  |
|----------------------------|----------------------------------|
| Vehicle weight             | 2 260kg                          |
| Length                     | 4 900mm                          |
| Width                      | 2 003mm                          |
| Height                     | 1 731mm                          |
| Wheelbase                  | 2 915mm                          |
| Track front                | 1 656mm                          |
| Track rear                 | 1 675mm                          |
| Luggage capacity           | 650 litres                       |
| Towing capacity (unbraked) | 750kg                            |
| Towing capacity (braked)   | 2900kg                           |
| Ground clearance           | 141mm (at maximum load capacity) |

#### CLAIMED PERFORMANCE

|                          |                          |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| Top speed                | 226km/h                  |
| Overall fuel consumption | 7,2-6,9l/100km (claimed) |
| Fuel tank size           | 93 litres                |
| Estimated tank range     | 1347km                   |

#### NEED TO KNOW

|                  |                    |
|------------------|--------------------|
| Price            | R999 900           |
| Price as tested  | R1 023 900         |
| Maintenance plan | Six-year/100 000km |



The GLE is more impressive off-road, thanks to the optional air suspension on this particular model. Note how similar the vehicles look in profile.

## SHOOT OUT

### MERCEDES-BENZ GLE COUPÉ VS BMW X6



The X6 has an interior worthy of a king. As standard, you get everything you need but our long-termer has been kitted out with about R200 000 worth of extras. BMW's infotainment system is more intuitive and easier to use than the system in the GLE.

This kind of gravel has the ability to upset a vehicle quite easily. The "washboard" causes the rear of the vehicle to bounce a fair amount, which can cause the rear to snap away if you aren't cautious. Anyone who has ever driven a bakkie on the same sort of surface will know what we're on about...

The BMW was and still is a joy to use on this kind of surface, even when it gets muddy. The all-wheel drive system is an impressive piece of kit as it always puts the power down exactly where you need it. You can turn in with confidence and accelerate without worrying that the 740Nm is going to result in a power slide you cannot control. If you are into that sort of thing, you can always use the Sport+ setting.

The Mercedes, on the other hand, is less comfortable on a gravel road. It is undoubtedly better over light to medium obstacles, thanks to its (optional) air suspension, but it was noticeably stiffer on the same washboard road. It's not uncomfortable or skittish, but the Beemer does it better.

#### About the power

It's silly to compare 270kW and 740Nm of torque with 190kW and 620Nm of torque, but you have to ask yourself how much power you really need.

As a daily drive, the Mercedes is more than powerful enough and it has the oomph to provide a good time when the opportunity

| BMW X6 M50D<br>STANDARD FEATURES |         |
|----------------------------------|---------|
| Foglamps                         | Yes     |
| Height/reach adj steering        | Yes/Yes |
| Tuner/MP3 player                 | Yes/Yes |
| USB terminal                     | Yes     |
| Bluetooth                        | Yes     |
| Aux input                        | Yes     |
| Automatic air con                | Yes     |
| Satellite navigation             | Yes     |
| Electric windows                 | Yes     |
| Adj exterior mirrors             | Yes     |
| Remote central locking           | Yes     |
| Alarm/immobiliser                | Yes     |
| Leather upholstery               | Yes     |
| Driver/passenger airbags         | Yes     |
| Sidebags/curtain bags            | Yes     |

presents itself. If you are in the market for a grand tourer which can cover great distances without stopping for fuel, the 350d makes a lot of sense. But if you want something sportier, we'd definitely recommend the 450 AMG. It's a sensational car and definitely the pick of the GLE coupé trio. In fact, if we'd been able to get our hands on that particular model and had ourselves a proper shoot-out, there's no doubt in our minds that that particular model would have trumped our beloved BMW. That turbocharged V6 has so much character and as a result, it's more

satisfying to drive.

The power difference between the BMW and Mercedes isn't noticeable in day-to-day situations. There simply isn't a place where you can legally put your foot to the floor and enjoy all the power they have on tap.

But there is one real world situation in which the BMW's power cannot be ignored, and that's when it comes to overtaking. The Mercedes does a decent job, but that tri-turbo in the BMW makes the Merc feel sluggish by comparison.

#### So which SUV coupé is best?

It's tough to say. We spent hours walking around both, and hundreds of kilometres behind the wheel in a bid to find some sort of fault, and we could only think of one thing "wrong" with each.

The BMW doesn't sound particularly nice, and we're not convinced that the rear-end styling of the Mercedes works. Those tail lamps look sensational on an S-Class coupé but less so on a GLE. That's basically it.

The one really is as good as the other. The Mercedes draws more attention than the BMW, but we suspect that has something to do with people just not knowing what it is yet. It also has a bigger boot and it comes as standard with 20-inch alloys, compared to the Beemer's 19-inches.

The real winner is the customer, because





The GLE's interior is also top-class. The tablet-like screen is easy to read, but the touch-pad interface takes some getting used to.

no matter which one you choose, you'll end up with an epic machine. If you are interested in the Mercedes, get the 450 AMG. Want a BMW? It will have to be the M50d. It's a staggering achievement in diesel engineering. We are very happy with our long-termers, and there's going to be a cloud of despondency over the office when it is eventually taken away from us!

## Not an easy choice

Danie Botha's view

If imitation is the sincerest form of flattery, BMW should feel chuffed – Mercedes-Benz's new GLE Coupé is an obvious imitation of the BMW X6.

From the proportions to the sweeping roof line to the side view, the GLE Coupé is all very X6-ish.

Still, the Mercedes stands higher and has more of a 4x4 look about it than the Beemer. The Merc should also be able to go farther off the beaten track, thanks to a more off-road oriented drivetrain.

Around town, the Mercedes' powerful turbodiesel engine and nine-speed automatic gearbox are not the best of pals. There are times when you step on the accelerator and have to wait for the combination to make up its mind about what gear and so on would be appropriate. This doesn't happen in the X6.

### MERCEDES-BENZ GLE 350D COUPÉ STANDARD FEATURES

|                           |         |
|---------------------------|---------|
| Foglamps                  | Yes     |
| Height/reach adj steering | Yes/Yes |
| Tuner/MP3 player          | Yes/Yes |
| USB terminal              | Yes     |
| Bluetooth                 | Yes     |
| Aux input                 | Yes     |
| Automatic air con         | Yes     |
| Satellite navigation      | Yes     |
| Electric windows          | Yes     |
| Adj exterior mirrors      | Yes     |
| Remote central locking    | Yes     |
| Alarm/immobiliser         | Yes     |
| Leather upholstery        | Yes     |
| Driver/passenger airbags  | Yes     |
| Sidebags/curtain bags     | Yes     |

On the open road, cruising at 120km/h, it is all very much on a par between the two vehicles, both offering excellent cruising ability, outstanding overtaking capability and great comfort.

The cabins are pretty much in the same league, both offering sumptuous accommodation. If I have to nit-pick, I'll mention the wider door sill of the Benz. You have to climb over the sill to get into the car. You just slide into the BMW.

A bugbear is the trendy stop-start system, fitted to both cars. The Benz's system seemed

to confuse itself at times. It did not seem certain whether the Coupé had stopped sufficiently for the system to be activated. On a few occasions, while I was slowly edging forward in the process of crossing a busy intersection, the system shut off the engine quite unexpectedly. This did not support a quick take-off when that gap appeared in the traffic.

I felt much more comfortable with the BMW's system, even though I'm not entirely convinced about its actual usefulness. The X6's engine seemed to shut down and start up again at the right moment, so I left it to do its planet-saving thing.

Choosing between these two German vehicles is not easy. I reckon the Mercedes is definitely the better looking, and as a big, spacious grand tourer-type 4x4 that also likes corners and the open road, it is hard to fault.

The BMW X6 is the better driver's car, both in town and on the open road. It just feels sportier and more responsive. I don't think it's an oil painting though, and this Beemer is less of a rough roader than the Mercedes.

In the end it is debatable how many GLE Coupé owners would actually end up on a gravel road. I guess very few, if any, would venture there.

In town, and as a luxurious grand tourer with a fair degree of "grin" behind the wheel, my vote therefore goes to the BMW X6. **lw**



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By entering the competition you will receive a free 12-month subscription to Getaway magazine and be entered into a draw to win a holiday package to the value of R50 000\*. The winner of the holiday package will be randomly selected via a draw. The decision will be final and the winner will be contacted and notified via telephone and email by Thule Sport and Cargo SA (Pty) Ltd. If the winner is unavailable 2 weeks after notification they will forfeit the prize. The winner will be allowed to choose from three holiday packages (for more information on these packages speak to your Thule Partner Store). The holiday must take place in 2016. The prize is not transferable and may not be converted into cash. The competition closes at 23:59 on the 31st of December 2015. No late entries will be accepted. The winner of the competition indemnifies the organizers and all parties involved in this competition against all claims that may arise from utilization of the prize. Entrance to this competition constitutes acceptance of the rules. \*may vary within a 10% discrepancy of the value claimed.



# A short drive in the future

The Mercedes-Benz GLC hybrid won't be available in SA for a while, but we recently had the opportunity to drive it in Germany

**I have driven** a few hybrid vehicles in my time, but I still haven't found one that I'd recommend to someone looking for the most frugal car that money can buy.

There are two reasons for this. Hybrids tend to be a lot more expensive than their normally powered family members, and the sacrifices you have to make are just not worth it.

The worst thing about most hybrids is the fitment of a CVT transmission in an attempt to make the vehicle as frugal as possible. It probably works in theory, but anyone who has experienced that incessant CVT drone will know how wearisome it can be. Rather give me a turbocharged diesel model any day of the week.

But now Mercedes may have changed my mind with its new GLC 350e. It won't be on sale in SA any time soon, which is a pity. I drove it in Germany and it's by far the best hybrid I've encountered.

You climb aboard and are greeted by the same lush interior you will find in every other GLC, which will be close to its SA debut by the time you read this. The only noticeable

difference is the addition of a few driving modes. It has Hybrid, E-mode, E-save and Charge.

In hybrid mode it uses both the engine and electric motor. E-mode allows for all-electric driving. The other two modes basically save electricity for later use.

The route Mercedes set for us was a mere 30km, so I chose to see how far I could get using electricity only. This is much more difficult than it sounds, because while the 350e is the eco warrior of the GLC bunch, it's also the most powerful. If you try, you can accelerate from zero to 100km/h in less than six seconds. Since the police have no sense of humour, it seemed wise not to try the electrifying start myself.

The electric motor's power delivery is instantaneous, which makes it fun to drive, until you hit the 30mph speed restriction in the village on our route. Then the lack of a noise strikes you. The GLC is a wonderfully insulated and refined vehicle when fitted with a petrol or diesel engine, so just imagine how calming it is

with no noise at all from the engine bay. It's so quiet you wonder about the safety implications for pedestrians. But then you remember the GLC's pedestrian detection system, which will warn you when a child, drunk or inattentive person wanders across your path.

Free from the speed limit, I tried to reach the all-electric top speed of 140km/h, but the twisty, narrow roads made that impossible. However, I can vouch for Mercedes' claim of a 34km range, because I did 32km on electricity before the petrol engine kicked in. If you live 15km from work, you could theoretically go for weeks without using a drop of fuel. And even if the engine eventually kicks in, Mercedes claims that it will use fuel at a rate of 2,6l/100km.

The best thing about this SUV is that there's no compromise whatsoever. The driving experience was no different from those in the other GLCs, and that will undoubtedly be one of the main drawcards for the hybrid if and when it comes to SA.

It doesn't shout too loudly about the fact that it's an eco-friendly car, which means you won't be judged as a smug wannabe eco warrior. This car is not about making a statement. It's about truly believing in the advantages of hybrid technology, while keeping a low profile.

The main drawback will probably be the price, although the cost of hybrid and electric vehicles has dropped over the last few years, mostly because the technology has advanced and become more readily available.

South Africans have been hesitant to adopt hybrids, but cars like the 350e will make it a lot easier to let go of our reliance on fossil fuels. <sup>uw</sup>

— Gerhard Horn





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# KEEP ON TRACK FOR 2016



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LOOK OUT FOR THE LIMITED EDITION ANNUAL **car** CALENDER

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# Growing up isn't easy

The Fiat 500 has done wonders for the Italian brand, but what happens when you pump it up to crossover proportions?

**The Fiat 500** was an instant hit with the young and fashionable on its launch in SA a few years ago. Its cute looks appealed to urbanites who needed something small, frugal, easy to drive and luxurious, and it certainly delivered on all those fronts.

Those young people who loved the 500 have since grown up, which inevitably means one or two additions to the family, and the need for extra space in a vehicle. Fiat doesn't cater for these additions, unless you count their panel van offerings in SA, so the average owner of a 500 has probably traded it in on something that wasn't a Fiat.

For an auto manufacturer to succeed, it has to keep its customers coming back. In a perfect world, a young person would buy a Fiat 500, keep it for a few years and then trade it in on another, bigger Fiat. That's where the 500X comes in. That, and the fact that every

manufacturer has a compact crossover in its range these days. So Fiat had to build a bigger 500.

I wasn't expecting much. The 500X is basically the same car as the Jeep Renegade, which I didn't get along with that well. The Renegade was overpriced, had a bouncy ride and the

interior was disappointing.

The Fiat's price, in Cross guise, gave me some hope. It retails for R344 900, which is fairly expensive, but prices start at R310 900.

Since it's meant to be the crossover version of the 500, there will be no shying away from comments on the design. I thought it was going to be "girly", for want of a better word, but I felt quite comfortable behind the wheel of the Venezia blue model we had on test.

I wouldn't describe it as a "fat 500". There are similarities between the two models, but the 500X has its own design characteristics and it wears them very well.

The X utilises the same 1,4-litre turbocharged engine as the Jeep. It's a decent engine that delivers 130kW and 230Nm of torque – good enough for it to feel adequately nippy around town.

You get a "Drive Mood Selector", which allows

you to set up the car for various types of driving. I found it best just to leave it in automatic, because that offers the best blend of comfort and performance.

In Sport mode, the 500X is just a bit too frantic for me, and the Traction setting is best left for a spot of light off-roading. The car does that rather nicely, despite the fact that it has only front-wheel drive.

The interior is pleasant and decently specified. The "500" badges embossed on the seats look good and the infotainment system is mounted within easy reach.

The car features all the latest must-have gadgets and safety equipment, making it a wonderful vehicle to live with on a daily basis.

Space in the rear is a bit tight, but adequate for a baby seat or two small children. Adults would be fine back there for an hour or two, but they might just become grumpy on a trip down to Durban from Johannesburg.

There's really not much to complain about. The 500X gives that same bouncy ride as the Renegade, but it didn't bother me as much. The Fiat looks sprightlier and you sit lower to the ground than you do in the Jeep, so it may just be a case of accepting the ride quality because it has a sportier character than its cousin.

The only real problem is the competition. This particular segment is overflowing with good vehicles, and while the 500X may sit comfortably near the top of the pile, it is definitely not the best crossover or SUV you can buy in the R300 000 to R400 000 price bracket. **LW**

– Gerhard Horn



The BX7 is Borgward's attempt at reviving the old brand from the fifties. Instead of a coupé or sedan, it's entering the oversaturated SUV/Crossover segment.

# Our favourites



The Frankfurt Motor Show is one of the highlights on the international automotive calendar and serves as a platform for manufacturers to showcase their latest models. These are our favourites, most of which will be on sale in SA within the next year

## **Borgward BX7**

Borgward, a German company that used to build beautiful cars in the fifties and sixties, is back. It released its first new car at the Frankfurt Motor Show, but instead of building stylish coupés and sedans, it's now in the business of producing SUVs.

The company's first new car in decades is called the BX7 and Borgward is working closely with Chinese manufacturer Foton to make it happen.

The BX7 will initially be offered with a turbocharged 2,0-litre four-cylinder engine with around 160kW at its disposal. The power will be sent to all four wheels via a seven-speed dual-clutch transmission.

Borgward says that a hybrid variant will follow, and this model will be good for nearly 298kW and an all-electric range of around 50km.

The BX7 is a fairly large car, measuring in at 4,69m. This means it has enough space for seven people. There is a host of luxuries to



Jaguar's F-Pace is a masterpiece and the British manufacturer says it'll set new standards for dynamic abilities in its segment.



make the drive as pleasant as possible.

Borgward will target the Chinese market and other emerging markets first, but it's not yet clear whether it will be made available in SA.

### **Jaguar F-Pace**

Jaguar says that its new crossover is the "ultimate practical sportscar," so there's no need to worry that it might steal sales away from the Land Rover. The F-Pace has not been built with off-road performance in mind, but rather a nice ribbon of smooth tarmac, like the Franschhoek Pass.

The F-Pace uses the same aluminium platform as the XE and XF sedans and measures in at 4731mm long and 2874mm wide. Jag claims the boot can swallow 650 litres.

A multitude of drivetrain options is available. The range kicks off with a 2,0-litre turbocharged diesel with rear- or all-wheel drive. A 2,0-litre turbocharged petrol engine with rear-wheel drive and a 3,0-litre turbodiesel all-wheel drive are also included.

The main act, and the one we are most interested in, is the 3,0-litre supercharged petrol model. With this engine the F-Pace can hustle to 100km/h in 5,1 seconds and go on to a top speed of 250km/h.

The F-Pace will come with a Jaguar Activity Key, which is a waterproof mix between a wristband and a key.

### **Land Rover Discovery Sport Dynamic**

While the F-Pace will interest the customer wanting something sporty, the Discovery Sport Dynamic will cater for those looking for a more versatile top of the range vehicle.

The Dynamic model comes with a number of model-specific features, including 19- or 20-inch alloy wheels in a satin grey or gloss black finish, Narvik Black inserts and a few additional exterior trimmings.

Land Rover also revealed that the Discovery will soon be available with the new All Terrain Progress Control, which allows the driver to set and maintain a constant speed in off-road conditions.

### **Volkswagen Tiguan**

Volkswagen's all-new Tiguan finally made its debut, and as we suspected, it is basically a toned-down version of the stylish Cross Coupé GTE.

The new Tiguan is 50kg lighter, despite being 60mm longer and 30mm wider than the outgoing model. Luggage capacity has been boosted to an impressive 615 litres.

It will be launched with four turbocharged petrol engines, with power outputs ranging from 92kW to 162kW. Four turbodiesel will also join the line-up and will offer options



The Land Rover Discovery Sport Dynamic comes with a number of model-specific features, including 20-inc alloy wheels.



The all-new Tiguan is definitely more striking than the model it replaces. A host of petrol and diesel engines will be available.



Bentley's Bentayga is claimed to be the fastest and most luxurious SUV the world has ever seen. It has a top-speed of over 300km/h and it will have a pricetag to match.



Kia's new Sportage finally made its debut. It will arrive in SA in the first quarter of 2016.



Nissan unveiled its Euro spec Navara, which comes with a new, more powerful 2,3-litre turbocharged diesel that will replace the ageing 2,5-litre powertrain currently used.

ranging from 85kW all the way to 176kW.

Base engines will be available in front-wheel drive only, but VW's 4Motion will be offered as standard on some models and an optional extra on others. A claimed ground-clearance of 200mm should make it rather useful off-road as well.

The 4Motion system comes with an Active Control switch on the centre console which gives the driver the option of four driving modes – on-road, snow, off-road and off-road individual.

### **Bentley Bentayga**

If you have an unlimited supply of cash and are looking for the most exclusive SUV money can buy, this is the car for you.

The Bentayga is equipped with a twin-turbo, 6,0-litre W12 engine, which produces 423kW and 700Nm of torque. This allows the Bentayga to reach a claimed top speed

of 301km/h, making it the fastest standard production SUV ever.

The interior will be crafted by hand in Britain and will be as luxurious as anything that has rolled off Bentley's factory floor.

"The Bentayga is truly the Bentley of SUVs," said Wolfgang Dürheimer, chairman and chief executive of Bentley Motors. "It redefines luxury in the sector and offers a genuine Bentley experience in any environment, thanks to a combination of unparalleled attention to detail, go-anywhere ability and cutting-edge technology. With this extraordinary car we are looking forward to an exciting period of strong growth and sales success."

### **Nissan Navara**

The Euro-specified Navara made its debut, and while it looks no different from the NP300 on sale in other parts of the world,

it does have a new 2,3-litre turbocharged diesel engine. This is claimed to be 24% more efficient than the powertrain it replaces, developing 118kW with one turbocharger and 140kW with a twin-turbo set-up.

The new Navara will be available with two- or four-wheel drive, with a six-speed manual gearbox as standard and a seven-speed automatic as an optional extra.

### **Kia Sportage**

The fourth-generation Sportage stole the show with its new look, advanced technology and greater overall quality.

The interior is claimed to be more practical, housing a range of standard features that will improve comfort, convenience, connectivity and safety.

The engine line-up will consist of a few well-known and updated powertrains, as well as all-new engines and transmissions.

The Mazda Koeru concept hints at what future Mazda models will look like.





It will arrive in SA in the first quarter of 2016.

### **Mazda Koeru**

Mazda showcased the latest iteration of its Soul of Motion design theme with the introduction of the Koeru concept. This new SUV is described as having “determined eyes”, a low cabin and massive 21-inch alloy wheels, which should give it presence on the road.

The body is extremely rigid and the “driver-oriented engines and suspension set-up” may make it the SUV of choice for enthusiasts.

No release date has been set, but disguised prototypes have been spotted all over Europe. The Koeru may be a replacement for the CX-5, but don’t expect it for at least another two years.

### **SsangYong XLV Air**

SsangYong revealed the XLV Air, which will eventually be introduced as the long-wheelbase version of the upcoming Tivoli crossover.

The stretched wheelbase offers increased interior space as well as a bigger boot. Like the Tivoli, the XLV Air will be made available with the choice of a 1,6-litre petrol or a 1,6-litre diesel engine. Both can be mated to a six-speed automatic or six-speed manual transmission. It can be ordered with two-wheel or all-wheel drive.



SsangYong went all-out at the Frankfurt show. Not only did it hint at a new Korando, but it also debuted the XLV Air, which will eventually become the seven-seat Tivoli.

The 1,6-litre diesel model, which will probably be the powertrain of choice, produces around 80kW and 300Nm of torque.

SsangYong claims a combined fuel consumption figure of 4,3l/100km in the standard Tivoli, so don’t expect an improvement from the larger XLV Air model.

### **VW Caddy Alltrack**

Volkswagen’s commercial vehicles division showcased the successor to the popular Cross Caddy, the Caddy Alltrack. It will stand out alongside other Caddy models because of its exclusive 17-inch alloy wheels and Mojave Beige paintwork. For the first time, the Caddy will also be offered with optional 4Motion

all-wheel drive technology.

Exterior additions include black trim panels on the wheel arches, black side sills and black finish on the lower edges of the bumpers, giving it a robust appearance.

Inside the passenger car version, the Alltrack has its own 7Summits seat covers plus folding tables on the front seatbacks. The seat covers in the panel van are made of tough Pillion fabric.

Both vehicle variants feature a leather package (steering wheel, handbrake lever and gear lever) with Muscat-colour stitching.

The Alltrack will be offered with a number of different engine and gearbox combinations. **lw**



The Caddy Alltrack will be more suited to off-road driving than the Cross Caddy it replaces, thanks to all-wheel drive being available as an optional extra.



# NEW and fresh

We bring you the latest news on new models and facelifted cars that have made their way to SA during the last month

**Text:** Gerhard Horn





# Q7 – Dauntless car for a divergent society

**I don't know** whether it was intentional or not, but when you hear the new marketing slogan for the Audi Q7 you can't help but think of the Divergent series of books and movies. Simply put, it's dauntless, which is basically just a fancy word for brave.

In the books and movies, Dauntless is a faction. The world has been destroyed, and to ensure it doesn't happen again, the populace is divided into five factions – Dauntless for the brave, Abnegation for the selfless, Amity for the peaceful, Candor for the honest and Erudite for the smart people. Those who don't fit into any single category are labelled as divergent.

I won't bore you with the details, but the message is that humans can't be divided into factions and still have the capacity to express emotions associated with all five of them.

The new Q7 certainly didn't scream "Dauntless" when I first saw it. From the side it looked like a tall station wagon – hardly intimidating. The overall design is nearly as daunting as its main rivals or the car it replaces, but I do like the idea of a car that looks expensive but stops just short of shouting about it. It's a gentlemanly approach to design, which doesn't mean it's bad – just that there's a time and place for everything. More on that later...

Oddly, the new Q7 is slightly smaller than the car it replaces, but it's still quite big – 5,05m long, 1,97m wide and 1,74m high. More importantly, it weighs nearly 300kg less than the previous model, which means better fuel consumption and performance.

It seems that no sacrifice was necessary when it came to space. With seven seats in place, it still has 295 litres of boot space. This shoots up to 890 litres when you fold the third row down.

In terms of luxury, Audi has chosen the same route as Volvo rather than its traditional German rivals. It's very minimalist in appearance, but that doesn't mean it's sparsely

equipped. As standard, the Q7 comes with navigation plus and touchpad control, keyless start, drive select, Bluetooth connectivity, two USB slots, partial leather upholstery, park distance control, cruise control and LED interior lighting. There's also a long options list to make life aboard even more comfortable.

The standard safety equipment includes attention assist and hill-hold assist, as well as Audi's "pre-sense basic" and "pre-sense city" safety packages.

The Q7 got five stars for safety from Euro NCAP and actually beat the Volvo XC90's score for child protection.

Optional assistance systems include adaptive cruise control, night vision assist, head up display, traffic jam assist, Audi active lane assist, collision avoidance assist, rear cross traffic assist and trailer manoeuvre assist, which will reverse park a trailer for you. (Why has nobody thought of that before?)

As a driving tool, the Q7 definitely is dauntless. Only one engine is currently available, but it's the one most customers would go for anyway.

The 3,0-litre TDI delivers 183kW and 600Nm of torque from 1500 to 3000rpm. Acceleration from 0-100 km/h takes 6.3 seconds, and the top speed is 234 km/h. Audi claims an average fuel consumption figure of only 5.7 litres per 100 kilometres.

Power is sent to all four wheels via an eight-speed automatic transmission. Under normal driving conditions, power is split between the front and rear axles in a 40:60 ratio. Should the wheels of one axle lose their grip, it can transfer as much as 70% of the power to the front and a maximum of 85% to the rear without any delay.

I had the chance to drive a Q7 fitted with the optional adaptive air suspension and if there's one option you should go for, it's this one. It allows the Q7 to lower itself to decrease drag and

improve fuel consumption, but the ride height can also be increased for off-road driving. I didn't get to test it properly, but I suspect the Q7 will be quite the off-roader, especially in soft sand.

The adjustable suspension's various settings work together nicely with the drive select and completely change the character of the vehicle in each setting.

The "comfort" setting offers the best balance on tar and allows the driver and his passengers to enjoy the Q7's ability to comfortably crush long distances, thanks to its silky smooth engine and the air suspension.

The same can be said of its performance on gravel. It just soldiers on in silence and only politely interrupts the driver when it hits seriously corrugated surfaces. It's one of the most reassuring vehicles I've had the pleasure to drive, and will undoubtedly be a joy to adventure enthusiasts with a lot of disposable income.

The Q7 is peaceful and smart, but I still wasn't 100% sure about the "dauntless" part until the sun was setting and a convoy of journalists was driving the last stretch of sandy road to get to the overnight camp. I glanced in my mirror and saw a white Q7 with its tell-tale LED lights driving up a sandy embankment through the dust I had left in my wake. It looked stunning and at home in that setting, which is more than can be said of a lot of luxury SUVs out there.

The new Q7 is definitely dauntless, but to focus on that part of its character would be a disservice to a car that does so much so well.

The Q7 retails for R924 000 and comes as standard with a five-year/100 000km Audi freeway plan.



## A Japanese warrior wagon

**Mitsubishi is giving** the lovable Pajero Sport one last push before an all-new model replaces it in 2016. It comes in the shape of a limited edition model called the Shogun, named after the great warlords of Japan. Mitsubishi says it's ready to conquer the harshest and most unforgiving landscapes we can imagine.

The new model, although not a facelift, features a number of additional extras over and above the standard goodies you would usually find in the Pajero Sport. But before we

get to that, here's a reminder of what the standard car is like:

The Pajero Sport was significantly revamped in 2013. The old 3,2-litre turbocharged diesel engine was replaced by an all-new 2,5-litre turbocharged common rail unit which produces 131kW and 350Nm of torque when mated to a five-speed automatic transmission, or 400Nm with a five-speed manual transmission.

It also comes as standard with Mitsubishi's renowned Super Select 4x4 system with shift-

on-the-fly technology, which allows the driver to change from two-wheel drive to four-wheel drive at speeds of up to 80km/h. The system provides a choice of four driving modes -- 2H, 4H, 4HLc and 4LLc -- to suit almost any terrain. And when the going gets tough you can always engage the rear differential lock.

On the inside, the seats and multi-function

## NEW LOCAL MODELS

steering wheel are covered in leather. A six-speaker audio system is standard. It incorporates a USB port and the Mitsubishi voice activated Link system integrates Bluetooth with steering wheel switches for the hands-free phone system.

On the active safety front, it features active stability and traction control, ABS and EBD. Passive safety is taken care of by a cell body structure and six airbags.

The car is definitely getting on in life, but it's still a pukka off-roader for overland and trail enthusiasts.

The Shogun package elevates the Pajero Sport's off-road credentials even further, thanks to the addition of a number of features

that enthusiasts will enjoy.

It comes along at the perfect time of the year, with the holidays just around the corner. You could realistically buy a Shogun and set off for Egypt without adding anything else.

Mitsubishi has a very successful history with this sort of thing. The Shogun follows in the footsteps of the Pajero Legend short-wheelbase and long-wheelbase models. They were aimed at the sort of people who not only want their cars to be tough, but to look tough as well.

So Mitsubishi has kitted out the Shogun with accessories to the value of R70 000, but since it gets these accessories at cost, the customer won't be paying anywhere near that. At the time of going to print, Mitsubishi still had to

sign off the final calculation, but we expect it to be half the true value of all the extra kit.

The additional accessories include a snorkel, Front Runner roof rack, protection plates for the gearbox and engine, a set of Yokohama Geolander Multi-Terrain tyres, front and rear shocks from Opposite Lock, rock sliders, daytime running lights, tow bar, rubber mat cargo protector and Shogun decals. To keep you on the right path, Mitsubishi is throwing in a Garmin GPS, loaded with Tracks4Africa software.

We'll be taking the Shogun to the battlefields of KwaZulu-Natal shortly, so keep an eye out for a full driving impression in the next edition.

# KB prepares for bakkie battle

The next 12 months will be the most interesting we've seen in recent years. In the space of six months, both the Ranger and Hilux will be replaced, while the all-new Navara and Mitsubishi Triton are waiting in the wings.

Isuzu has prepared its evergreen KB for the battle by introducing a few subtle upgrades to its luxurious KB300 double cab and extended cab models. The range now includes a new flagship – the KB300 LX 4x4 double cab automatic. The five-speed automatic transmission will attract the attention of the small but significant group of customers who prefer a bakkie with only two pedals.

Double cab LX models also receive keyless entry and stop/start technology, as well as a touch-screen infotainment system with integrated DVD, reverse camera and satellite navigation.

The tried and trusted 3,0-litre engine is carried over from the pre-facelift model, but a new 2,5-litre turbodiesel has been introduced for those looking for a bakkie on a budget. This powertrain develops 100kW and 320Nm of torque, which feels perfectly adequate in the

entry-level double cab model.

Isuzu took us on a nice route over a koppie near Rustenburg and the engine performed admirably on some fairly steep inclines. On the N4 highway it felt just as good, with more than enough torque to easily overtake slower traffic.

Comfort levels are perfectly acceptable in the entry-level double cab and you are well catered for in the standard features department.

I didn't get the opportunity to sample a top-spec model with the new infotainment system, but the feedback from other motoring writers was fairly positive. We hope to get one on test shortly and will then be able to comment more fully.

The off-road course wasn't as tough as the route we drove when the KB was first launched in 2013, but there were enough obstacles to show that the new model is very good off the beaten track. We particularly enjoyed the anti-stall technology, which keeps the car going on an incline. This system is so good that you can slot the car into first gear in low range and take your feet completely off the pedals. The KB 250 was able to idle up every obstacle, apart

from a 45-degree incline that Isuzu had set up. However, I was told that the KB300 could do it if the tyre pressures were low enough, which gives some indication of this engine's power.

Isuzu also took the opportunity to demonstrate its new stability control system on a closed gravel road. An advanced driving instructor did a standard "moose test" (swerving to avoid an object and then back into the lane he was driving on) with the system off and then with it on. With this active safety feature switched off, not even an advanced driver could save it from spinning out at around 80km/h. With the system turned back on, the Isuzu behaved much better and kept the rear axle in check. I did not get the chance to test it myself, but from the sidelines I could see the system working away and winning the fight against the sudden and unexpected changes in direction.

As part of the sales package, Isuzu offers a customer care programme which covers all routine maintenance and roadside emergencies, a five-year/120 000km warranty and a five-year/90 000km service plan.



### PRICING

#### Extended cab

|                          |           |
|--------------------------|-----------|
| KB 250 D-TEQ F/S 4x2     | R 317 000 |
| KB 300 D-TEQ LX 4x2      | R 394 200 |
| KB 300 D-TEQ LX 4x4      | R 451 800 |
| KB 300 D-TEQ LX 4x2 Auto | R 407 500 |

#### Double cab

|                          |           |
|--------------------------|-----------|
| KB 250 D-TEQ F/S 4x2     | R 325 700 |
| KB 250 D-TEQ LE 4x2      | R 406 200 |
| KB 250 D-TEQ LE 4x4      | R 429 100 |
| KB 300 D-TEQ LX 4x2      | R 463 700 |
| KB 300 D-TEQ LX 4x2 Auto | R 474 900 |
| KB 300 D-TEQ LX 4x4      | R 523 600 |
| KB 300 D-TEQ LX 4x4 Auto | R 529 700 |



# Hyundai adds more value to Santa Fe range



**Hyundai has introduced** a subtle mid-life facelift for the Santa Fe. It has been a huge success for Hyundai, offering a premium product that can stand toe-to-toe with the best the German manufacturers have to offer, but at a better price.

In the UK, the Santa Fe is a fairly popular vehicle, and sales there are a significant contributor to a 1,2 million global figure for the brand.

The Santa Fe was lacking a few of the advanced features that some of its competitors can brag about, but Hyundai has remedied this.

On the design front, the new model has been brought in line with the rest of the Hyundai family. The hexagonal front grille is finished in chrome, while its road presence has been enhanced by the addition of redesigned fog lights and LED daytime running lights framed in silver trim. The layout of the xenon lights has changed, while the rear light clusters feature a new LED graphic.

To further enhance the elegant status at the top of the Hyundai SUV pile, the alloy wheels have also been redesigned.

Move inside and you'll note new fabrics and subtle upgrades to the centre console. The infotainment system has been upgraded and features every kind of connection one could possibly want. As this is a luxury vehicle, Hyundai has included a host of

comfort and convenience features, including a power tailgate that will open automatically when you stand behind the boot lid for three seconds. No need to shuffle your foot underneath the boot lid and falling over in a crowded mall parking lot.

The redesigned centre console houses an all-new audio and navigation system, which Hyundai developed locally to make it as user-friendly to South Africans.

Passengers in the second row will have sliding seats, which benefit from an extra 15mm of travel, bringing the total adjustment to 270mm.

The big news is the addition of some active safety systems. The pre-facelift Santa Fe already boasted a five-star Euro NCAP rating but even so, the new model can be bought with "Autonomous Emergency Braking", which works automatically if a potential crash is anticipated, Blind Spot Detection, Rear-Cross Traffic Alert and a new Smart Cruise Control function that follows a set distance from the car in front.

For the first time in a Hyundai, a 360-degree around-view monitor is included to make parking as easy as possible. It uses a number of cameras to achieve the all-round view. We have used the system in other cars, and it is a boon in tight spaces. And when you don't feel like parking the car yourself, you can leave it to Parking Assist, which now

supports both bay and parallel parking.

The 2,2-litre CRDi turbocharged diesel engine has been retuned slightly to increase power and decrease fuel consumption and emissions. It now pushes out 150kW and 440Nm of torque, and Hyundai claims it will need only 6,7l/100km on the combined cycle.

In SA, this engine can be mated only to a six-speed automatic transmission, which is fine by us. We have extensive experience of this engine/transmission combination, and it is very good.

The entry-level five-seat Elite Auto retails for R649 900 and is available with front-wheel drive only. This model offers customers a nice entry-point to the Santa Fe range and will likely find favour with those people who want the space and elevated driving position, but don't need all-wheel drive.

The seven-seat Elite Auto comes standard with all-wheel drive, which provides optimal traction in tricky conditions. The centre differential can be locked to provide a 50/50 power split between the front and rear axles. This should be particularly handy on loose surfaces. This model comes as standard with all the latest safety and convenience features. Considering the price has only gone up by 6% to R699 900, it represents exceptional value for money.

The Santa Fe is sold with a five-year/100 000km warranty and a five-year/90 000km service plan. Service intervals are set at 15 000km. **LW**



# Dependable, comfortable and quirky

We take you on a quick tour through the *Leisure Wheels* long-term garage, to see what the vehicles have been up to in the past month



## BMW X6 M50d

**The BMW joined** us just as the last issue was going to print, so we didn't have a lot to say about it at the time.

Luckily, one month is more than enough time to gather some thoughts on this Sports Activity Vehicle, and whether BMW can justify asking R1,3 million for it.

As we mentioned previously, the BMW was used as a support vehicle for the spotlight shoot-out. It quickly became apparent that space wasn't an issue. The boot was big enough to swallow about half the spotlights, two camping chairs and a wide assortment of other equipment. I was not expecting

that, but it was a nice surprise nevertheless.

As the evening was all about lighting and lumens, the BMW's own lighting system was up for discussion as well. The vehicle has an "intelligent" lighting system, which follows the movements of the steering wheel. It's a brilliant system and one that I've grown to appreciate in the time that I have been forced to use back roads during repair work on the N14. The BMW simply washes

the road ahead in brilliant white light, making it easy to spot any hazards.

Our long-term takes things a step further with its "night vision". This is a fairly technical system, but it works like the night vision you see in the movies, except that in the BMW the feed is displayed on a screen behind the steering wheel. It's not as intrusive as it sounds, and I soon found myself quite used to the concept of giving it a quick glance every few seconds, as one does with the rearview mirror. It also gives you a clear warning when it spots a possible pedestrian hazard.

There's a lot more to this car, and we look forward to delving further in the coming months.



## Subaru Outback

The Outback's station wagon body is undoubtedly the oldest body type we have in our garage, but that's not necessarily a bad thing.

The Duster is compact and funky while the BMW is large and intimidating. The Outback just sits quietly in the corner, elegant and discreet as a tasteful evening gown.

It must be said that it is by far the most practical vehicle of the three. If you want something small that you can park easily, you take the Duster and if you want to look good, it has to be the BMW.

But if you want to fly by inconspicuously and in supreme comfort, with the whole family aboard, the Subaru does it best.

## Renault Duster

I have now spent some proper time behind the wheel of the facelifted Duster and, as with the pre-facelift model, there are a few niggles, one of them quite serious.

The interior feels like new, thanks to the leather seats. This is a relatively small change in the scheme of things, but it has certainly elevated the levels of plushness. The cabin also seems quieter than before, which is something several people have noticed in the two months it's been with us. And don't get me started on the cruise control... What a joy!

There is, however, one serious issue. The cruise control button now sits where the traction control (TC) used to be. We just assumed that the TC button had been moved, but a few weeks later, when we wanted to drive the Duster off-road, we couldn't find it.

I phoned the dealer and it turns out that the TC system can no longer be switched off. This means the vehicle won't be as good as its predecessor in soft sand. The TC will kill the power and the new Duster could just bog down.

We tried pulling the fuse, but this also affects the clutch start system, so if you pull the fuse, you can't start the car.

What a pity Renault have made this change. **LW**







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# ROAR!

The official Toyota press material calls it the Toyota Hilux Racing Experience. Toyota staffers refer to it as the T-Rex. This is the most outrageous, over-the-top and brilliant Hilux ever. We spent a few days with this R1-million monster to find how it fared as a daily runner...

**Text:** Danie Botha **Photography:** Jannie Herbst



With around 350 kW of angry V8 racing engine on tap and a light "bak", sideways action on a gravel road is just a prod of the right foot away. Yeehah!

**"Ag tog, what** was Toyota thinking with this Lexus engine in a Hilux? Everyone does that nowadays. My cousin Hennie did it with his SFA Hilux. So what, I say... a Lexus V8 engine in a Hilux? So bleddie what..."

Oom Frikkie, writing on a social media platform, is obviously a Toyota man. Through thick and thin, and through four-cylinder or V8.

But he does not fully grasp what Toyota Motors SA, in conjunction with Hallspeed, has created here.

Firstly, the T-Rex was not conceived through necessity, as in replacing an out-of-service original engine with 300 000km on the clock. It was designed to be a Hilux showpiece.

Hallspeed, builders of the highly successful Dakar Rally Racing Hilux bakkie, did not cut corners in this conversion. In fact, it is obvious that Toyota's marketing department gave Glyn Hall and his team the proverbial open cheque book to build this once-off special to celebrate the millionth Hilux sold in SA.

Joe Soap Lexus conversions, which are indeed

a dime a dozen these days, mostly use the UZ range of V8 engines. These are powerful but they normally peak at around 200kW, even in slightly modified form.

The five-litre V8 in this Hilux is not just any Lexus engine. It's the unit from the Lexus IS-F sports car – the same engine that is used in the Dakar Racing Hilux bakkies.

In standard trim, the engine delivers 335kW of power and 600 Nm of torque. In this Hilux it breathes through a high performance exhaust system and a Pectel Cosworth racing engine management system, so it probably delivers around 350 kW.

The 3.0D4-D 4x4 donor vehicle's original five-speed manual gearbox is retained, along with a custom-made bell housing and a twin-plate AP Racing clutch. The original differentials have also been retained but modified with a 4.375 ratio.

The suspension received a major makeover. Old Man Emu's fully adjustable BP-51 bypass shock absorbers, OME rear leaf springs and a reduction of 50mm in the ride height have

endowed T-Rex with spectacular handling and grip, no matter the surface.

The front disc brakes were discarded in favour of 350mm discs with billet aluminium four-piston callipers from Power Brake – an official Toyota Motorsport supplier.

The interior features some upgrades. These include a Cobra racing bucket seat, an OMP racing steering wheel and an AIM electronic racing dash, integrated with the Pectel engine management system. Climate control and an infotainment system, as well as full leather (except for the driver's seat) and electric windows all round, are part of the deal.

So, Oom Frikkie, comparing this Hilux to Hennie's SFA conversion would be like comparing a Ferrari F80 with a Fiat Uno.

## **Roar! Roar! Roaaaar!**

We first got to drive T-Rex during a media event, where everyone had a go on a short gravel circuit. However, with a very protective driving instructor in the passenger seat keeping a tight





rein on proceedings, it was a bit like kissing your sister.

Our first on-road driving encounter with T-Rex, a few weeks later, was like being introduced to Hulk Hogan – in the ring at a WWF wrestling match. And Hulk wants to get some fighting on. It is an intimidating beast, this T-Rex.

Slide into the Cobra bucket seat, turn the ignition key and the angry five-litre V8 roars to life. Even at idle it is angry and loud.

Select first gear and gently modulate the twin-plate AP Racing clutch. Unlike a production clutch, the racing version is on or off, so the margin between a spectacular take-off and an embarrassing stall is not big.

As the revs increase, the angrier T-Rex gets. And when the AIM electronic dashboard's shift lights are activated at 6000r/min, this T-Rex is in full flight, screaming, thundering and obliterating everything in its path. It is a thing of utter motoring beauty.

Driving T-Rex in town and in traffic is an adventure. Taxi drivers actually behave around you, keen to hear that V8 sing its angry song. The school run proves interesting: as the T-Rex roars its way, as discreetly as possible, into the parking area, fellow parents raise their eyebrows, and point and whisper in hushed tones about this apparent hooliganism.

On the road, Ford Ranger drivers pretend not to notice the T-Rex at all. Toyota Hilux drivers wave, smile and take videos.

Traffic and the T-Rex are not mates. That AP clutch is very tricky in stop-and-go situations, especially on a slight incline. And after three days of driving the machine, your left leg does go a bit numb, and your back starts complaining about the Cobra racing seat.

There is no traction control, stability control or ABS, and with around 350 kW in power and a



very light tail, the T-Rex will try to kill you.

Taking off from a traffic light is an event in itself. With that on-off clutch, so much power on tap and a light "bak", getting off the line without burning rubber is a challenge. If you want to make a brisk getaway to turn between traffic, smoking a rear tyre is all too easy. (Smoking a tyre is rather spectacular, mind you!)

But it's on gravel that T-Rex is really at home – it is a rally car at heart, after all. The OME BP-51 suspension, the quicker steering, the angry engine, the beefy brakes and the four-wheel drive traction ensure that you can, if you have your wits about you, emulate some rally driving antics. And it just feels and sounds so good!

This Hilux is an amazing piece of automotive kit. If ever there was a vehicle that will make you wake up at 1am to go and buy a packet of sugar at the 24-hour convenience shop on the other side of the city, this is it. T-Rex scares old ladies and makes young children cry. It takes one back to the days when driving was fun, wild, challenging, intimidating...

As mentioned, there are no electronics that will save the day when you overcook it. There is just this big, beautiful V8 engine with almost 500 horses aided and abetted by some party tricks that you have to take by the scruff of the neck and... drive.

This is a once-off model. Toyota says it will not build any more, and maybe that's just as well.

The T-Rex is like handing an Olifant tank with a loaded cannon to a moody 18-year-old the day he gets his driver's licence, and sending him on an errand to central Johannesburg.

T-Rex is a thing of beauty, thunder, adrenalin and a whole list of superlatives.

It is... the ultimate Toyota Hilux. **LW**

Left: This is no backyard mechanic special... Hallspeed transplanted a Lexus IS-F engine into the Hilux engine bay in a most professional, no-expenses-sparged operation. The V8 engine produces more power than it does in Giniel de Villiers' Dakar Racing Hilux! Insert: Racing bucket seat, racing steering wheel and AIM electronic racing dashboard give a hint of the T-Rex's capabilities.

## SPECIFICATIONS: TOYOTA HILUX T-REX

| ENGINE                     |  |
|----------------------------|--|
| Type                       | V8 Lexus IS-F 2UR-GSE  |
| Valvetrain                 | 32-valve DOHC, variable valve timing   |
| Displacement               | 4969cc   |
| Bore & stroke              | 94mm x 89,5mm  |
| Max power                  | 335 kW @ 6000r/min   |
| Max torque                 | 600 Nm @ 3250r/min   |
| Fuel supply and management | Pectel Cosworth direct injection   |
| Exhaust system             | Full tubular with Dakar-spec inlet manifold                                      |
| Fuel required              | 95 octane petrol   |
| CHASSIS & BODY             |  |
| Lay-out                    | Front-engine, part-time 4x4  |
| Frame                      | Ladder-frame chassis   |
| Brakes (front)             | Power Brake 350mm discs with billet aluminium four-piston callipers              |
| Brakes (rear)              | Standard Hilux 3.0D4-D drums   |
| ABS/EBD/BAS                | No   |
| Wheels                     | 18-inch XD Series  |
| Tyres                      | 265/60 R18 Cooper Zeon XST-A   |
| Steering                   | Stock with faster gearing  |
| Suspension (front)         | Double wishbone, fully adjustable Old Man Emu (OME) BP-51 bypass shock absorbers |
| Suspension (rear)          | OME leaf springs, fully adjustable Old Man Emu BP-51 bypass shock absorbers      |
| Ride height                | Lowered by 50mm from standard Hilux 3.0D4-D                                      |
| DRIVETRAIN                 |  |
| Transmission type          | Five-speed manual Hilux D4-D   |
| Clutch                     | Twin-plate AP Racing   |
| Traction/stability control | None   |
| Limited slip diff          | No   |
| Differential lock          | Yes, with custom switch  |
| Differentials              | Hilux D4-D units with 4.375 ratio  |
| PERFORMANCE                |  |
| 0-100km/h                  | Approx 7 secs  |
| Top speed                  | Approx 200km/h   |
| PRICE                      |  |
| Approx                     | R1-million   |

# 300km/h off-road supercar!

International correspondent Robb Pritchard is not easily excited by a crossover vehicle, but the Korres P4 is not your average Toyota RAV4 or Landy Freelander. In fact, Pritchard says it provided the most amazing off-road driving experience he's ever had! Meet the 380 kW crossover on steroids!

**Text:** Robb Pritchard **Photographs:** Robb Pritchard and Korres

A 300km/h supercar that can drive over boulders like these? You bet! It all comes down to an innovative suspension system and drivetrain, combined with a 380 kW Chevrolet Corvette engine.







The Korres P4 can rocket from 0-100km/h in just 3,8 seconds on a gravel road, and it also handles the slippery corners like a real off-road racing vehicle. Below: The stainless steel frame design and trick suspension system, rounded off with a seven-litre Corvette V8 engine.

**The old concrete** road surface is slippery, the seatbelts are far too loose and not the five-point harness type. And there's no helmet, either. Nor body panels.

We are driving on a quiet public road in a suburb of Athens – in a car that does 0-100km/h in 3,8 seconds.

It all happens too quickly for my brain to keep up with. My arms flail about looking for something to grab hold of because in a few seconds we are at 170km/h and need to cut the corner to get around it safely.

But there's a car where we need to go. Driver Dimitris Korres has to steer out of the turn and we start to slide. The rocks on the roadside are big and sharp, the trees solid, and the other car is approaching fast. But Dimitris is an expert driver and knows his car inside out. Not only does he know every single nut and bolt – he designed more than 10 000 individual parts in it and it also bears his name. This is the Korres P4.

I've been in a few cars with comparable performance and I've driven some pretty amazing off-roaders, but no car that I can think of is so good both on and off road.

The track up the hill was rough and rocky, better suited to goats and Land Rover Defenders. Second gear low range would probably be suitable.

If you are a lover of cars and of motorsport, you will probably know about the Group B rallying days – Peugeot 205 T16s, Audi quattro S1s and so on. They did 0-100km/h in 3,8 sec, and that's what the Korres can do. On rough gravel tracks!

The seven-litre LS7 V8 out of a Chevy Corvette Z06 is mid-mounted and its 380kW pushes us forward faster than I have ever accelerated before.

Dimitris knows the track and that he has to keep to the left before a blind crest, but I can't help thinking we are off-line and that

clipping a large rock will flip us over. The lack of helmets and the dodgy seatbelts will seal our fate. But the Korres nails it at over 120km/h, with hardly a shudder.

But then the track ends and in front of us is a steep outcrop of bare rock. Dimitris pushes a lever and there is a grinding noise like a broken gearbox. The car is lifting itself up to get more ground clearance!

Before getting loosely strapped in, all I had seen of this car was a photograph of it with a wheel perched high up on rock and I have no idea what is about to happen... let alone the mechanics of how it is actually possible.

Dimitris thinks that about 60cm is enough for what's ahead but it can go up to a metre high! There is clearly something underneath that needs some serious investigation, especially as the car that just handled like a Ferrari on the tar is now making a piece of cake of the rock crawl!

It's steep, about 45 degrees, but even on standard road tyres there is no issue. We go straight up. I just can't believe it – it defies logic.

Over the top there is a sizeable rock, so big that I point it out as a good co-driver should. But Dimitris aims right for it... and over we go. Seriously, a tricked up Land Rover would have struggled with that.

We bump over the rough ground full of loose rocks and bushes until we get back to the track again. Then it's all flat out, Dakar-style driving back to the workshop, with me holding desperately onto the roof as we drift



around the corners, back wheel hanging out over the drop.

I'm shaking like a leaf when I get out and also grinning from ear to ear. And then Mr Korres says those amazing words: "Your turn next."

But first I want to find out how this car can do what it just did.

The project started with the engineering genius of Dimitris Korres. His day job is coming up with practical solutions to crazy engineering problems, such as working out how to move a 1000-ton ancient carving up a mountain in Yemen. Bridges and buildings are also on his impressive CV.

But cars are where his heart is. "One thing Greece has plenty of is bad roads," he says. "I lost count of the number of cars that fell to pieces as I was trying to drive fast, so that was the first design parameter... and the most important aspect for that is suspension.

"The Citroën 2CV has a twisted suspension-like coil so when the front wheel lifts there is a reaction in the back wheel. I always liked that but think it worked the wrong way because the higher the suspension goes the stiffer it gets. I needed a system that worked in the opposite way – stiff for on-road and soft for off. That wasn't an easy solution, but nothing is impossible."

# EXTREME WHEELS

## KORRES P4



Above: Ready to rumble in the Greek jungle! Even without its body panels, the Korres looks pretty good. Below: Renowned engineer Dimitris Korres is the man behind the P4. This is the fourth prototype in his quest to build the ultimate rough road car, hence the "P4".



Bottom: The suspension can be adjusted by up to 500mm... ideal for racing around gravel tracks and climbing over some cement blocks!



The first prototype was a working platform to integrate the ideas in a working environment. The second, with a bike engine, was a great trials buggy but it wasn't until the previous incarnation, called the P3, that the project started to be realised.

This has been filmed (and the video posted on Youtube) not only climbing up some steps but doing a three-point turn on them. You cannot fail to be impressed by this.

But that was four years ago. The project has progressed even further since then.

"The P3 was good but showed us what parts needed to be redeveloped. For example, we learned that the chassis could take a lot more power than the Nissan 350Z engine we had, but the transmission couldn't. So we started redesigning the gearbox."

Sounds simple, right? But as I listen to how they spent nearly two years learning about planetary geometry and what minuscule tolerances they had to incorporate, I understand just how amazing the P4 is.

"The gearbox is very compact, just 18cm long, and doesn't have just high and low ratios but also a middle one for normal off-roading. The lowest gearing has a ratio of 1:5. There are many people who say that they are experts, but to find a real one who can take all of our crazy ideas and make them into a reality inside an 18cm box... it's a bit like going on a quest to find a spiritual guru," Dimitris says.

"Our pilgrimage ended when we found Maktrak, which truly is a master of cogs and shafts, and now we have something wonderful!"

The rear diff is also an engineering masterpiece.

"The rear propshaft has to run next to the engine, so inevitably the rear diff has to be offset. But we needed to get the shafts the same length. We designed it so that the CV joints are actually inside the diff. We don't know if anyone else has ever done this," says the Greek engineer.

"We also chose to make the chassis with plates rather than tubes because then you can get it much more accurate. By accurate I mean down to tenths of a millimetre. Basically it's perfect."

Without body panels, a lot of the car's inner workings are plainly visible, including the beefy front double wishbone assembly. Says Dimitris: "We started with 400kg of high grade aluminium but machined it down to 40kg."

But the main component that elevates the Korres from a cool car to an unbelievably amazing one is the suspension. And it goes a lot further than just the bespoke, self-designed shocks made by Bilstein. The secret is the golden arm with a drop bar attached to the lower wishbone. For those not too mechanically minded, like myself, it seems either hocus-pocus or even outright voodoo.

"The front wheels are attached to the chassis via upper and lower wishbones and the rear wheels by trailing arms. The dampers are independent, as they are in many vehicles. But the suspension is based on the principle of wheel interconnection between front left and right rear and vice-versa. The front to back is through a system of pushrods, rocker arms and levers with an elastic unit containing a spring, on either side of the vehicle. The diagonal connection is achieved through a





This page: The P4's *coup d'état*: Aluminium control arms in front and stainless steel swing arms in the back, with the front left wheel and right rear wheel connected, as well as the front right wheel and the left rear wheel, through an innovative linking system. An engine output shaft increases or decreases the length of the side elastic unit, which increases or decreases ride height. In addition, custom-built Bilstein shocks, a custom-built six-speed manual gearbox (with normal, sports and trail ratios) and trick lockers on all three differentials ensure that the Korres P4 can go places where few 4x4s can. And it can also do 300km/h!

## Korres P4 – the numbers

**Engine:** Chevrolet Corvette LS7 V8

**Displacement:** 7008cc

**Power:** 380 kW @ 6300r/min

**Torque:** 637Nm @ 4800r/min

**Gearbox:** Custom six-speed manual (normal, sports and trail drives)

**Drive:** Part-time 4WD with rear-wheel drive or locked 4WD

**Front differential:** OX diff with pneumatic lock

**Rear differential:** Auburn Gear LSD diff with electromagnetic lock

**Central differential:** Custom, worm-gear type, mechanical lock

**Chassis:** Stainless steel main frame, aluminium front sub-frame and stainless steel and aluminium rear sub-frame

**Suspension (front):** Aluminium control arms, connected via steel pushrods, aluminium rockers and steel springs to the rear swing arm of the same side

**Suspension (rear):** Stainless steel swing arms, connected via steel pushrods, aluminium rockers and steel springs to the front control arm of the same side

**Anti-roll bars:** Diagonal connection of wheels, front left to right and vice versa

**Dampers:** Custom Bilstein with external bypass

**Ride height adjustment:** 500mm

**Brakes (front):** AP Racing 362mm discs, six-piston callipers

**Brakes (rear):** AP Racing 343mm discs, four-piston callipers

**Wheels:** 18-inch Braid Winrace aluminium wheels

**Weight:** 1600kg

**0-100km/h:** 3,8 sec

**Top speed:** 300km/h

**Price:** About R3,4-million (excluding import duties)

**More information:** [www.korresproject.gr](http://www.korresproject.gr)

system of pushrods and two torsion bars," explains Korres.

But there is more! The mechanical ride height variation system elevates the car, not only by a metre of ride height, but also into the realms of the barely conceivable!

"This works by a mechanical system that takes drive from the output shaft of the engine, and increases or decreases the length of the side elastic unit, therefore lowering or raising the height. This is the mechanism we designed that makes the suspension stiff for on-road and soft when it is extended to flex-mode."

And then there's the aesthetics. The body looks like a cross between a Lotus Elise and a DeLorean, but was strangely one of the most complicated things to get right – a difficult compromise between form and function.


"Most of the work was done with one-third scale wooden models," says Dimitris. "More than 20 of them were made and discarded until the version you see now was arrived at, by way of the general consensus of racing

drivers, engineers, professional car designers and even visual artists."

Now it's my turn behind the wheel. My off-road background is 4x4 trails and expeditions where "as fast as necessary, as slow as possible" is the mantra. The P4 ethos, however, is "faster than you thought possible".

"You can put your foot down," Dimitris keeps saying, but perhaps he has no idea just how far out of my depth I am, drifting at 120km/h on rocks, ruts and gravel. Also, the Korres is practically a work of art so it feels wrong, just hammering it around for fun.

So I'll refer you to a Youtube video: former world rally champion Tommi Makinen puts the P4 through its proper paces. In the video he stutters in his Finnish accent: "Absolutely incredible! I thought I had seen everything... but this!"

After my drive I completely agree with him. I'm sure someone accustomed to such speed and performance could give a much better report on just how good it really is, but the only thing I can say is "WOW!" 



# Pump it up!

The only way to negotiate extremely sandy conditions is to deflate your 4x4's tyres to less than 1 bar. That's all well and good on sand, but when you are done with the sand blasting and want to head back to civilisation at 120km/h on tar, you need to inflate those tyres again. And for that you'll need a portable air compressor. We put 11 products to the test

**Text:** Danie Botha **Photography:** Jannie Herbst



Eleven compressors, ranging in price from less than R1000 to almost R13 000, were put to the test. Choosing the ideal product for the intended use is important – as is the size of your wallet.



**There he was**, in his every-accessory-under-the-sun 4x4. And he was using a tiny little air compressor that resembled a toy, and not a vital off-road accessory, to inflate the trick 4x4's 33-inch mud terrain tyres.

BRRRRRRRRRR, started the little air compressor bravely, while its custodian stared intently at the tyre being inflated, trying to spot any sign of actual inflation.

BRRRRRRRRRR, continued the little air compressor five minutes later, with the custodian now stomping about impatiently, occasionally glancing in the direction of his travel companions, who were already inflating wheel number three.

Brrrrrr-brrrrr... tried the little air compressor, another five minutes later, still attached to the same tyre.

Yep, they say you should never take a knife to a gunfight. And unfortunately for our customised subject described above, he had covered all but one of the accessory bases: an air compressor suited to the task at hand.

Think about it: that little pump (a true story, by the way) had to work so much harder than the bigger units, and it still did not manage to get the job done properly. Its longevity will, no doubt, also suffer due to the workload and running at higher temperatures.

So, to give you an idea of what is available in the market and at what price, we gathered 11 air compressors, ranging from units retailing for less than R1000 to almost R13 000.

Besides listing all the basic specifications, pricing and where you can buy the units, we also subjected each unit to a simple air-flow test.

## We need more air, captain!

Our test was a simple one, designed to simulate a typical situation a pump like this is used for. We completely deflated a Continental Cross Contact tyre (245/65 R17), as fitted to a Volkswagen Amarok 2.0BiTDI 4Motion. Each compressor had to pump the tyre for one minute, starting with the completely deflated tyre. We always used the same high quality tyre gauge to measure the pressure after the test. This way we could test actual per minute air flow rates – the same method the compressor manufacturers use to rate the performance of their products.

Here we go then, listed in alphabetical order:



We deflated a VW Amarok's 245/65 R17 right front tyre completely, and gave each compressor a one minute blast at inflating the tyre (with the vehicle's engine running). We then measured the pressure achieved by each product.



### ARB High Performance Compressor (CKMP12)

**Say what?** The single motor ARB comes standard with its own hard cover carry case. Designed and built in Australia, it looks and feels like a top quality product.

**Powerplant:** Single motor (12V supply)

**Pressure cut-out switch:** Yes

**Weight (packaged with all accessories):** 7,2kg

**Cool features:** Compact, quality unit with hard cover carry case

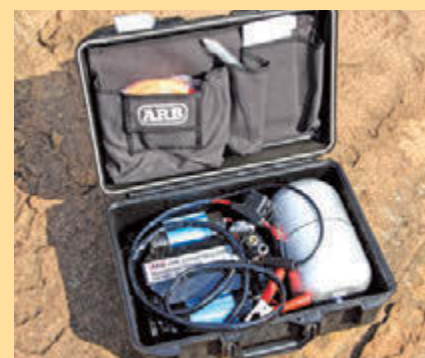
**Not so cool:** Okay, so it's performance versus price ratio did not work out so well. But, if you want a compressor that will still work like a charm 10 years after you bought it, this ARB is it.

**Warranty:** Two years

**Price:** R4 945

**Available at:** [www.4x4megaworld.co.za](http://www.4x4megaworld.co.za)

**Result (One minute inflation from complete deflation):** 0,9 bar



### ARB High Performance Twin Compressor (CKMTP12)

**Say what?** This Aussie product is the most expensive in this test, but its list of credentials reads like the "what's what" in the world of compressors. It's got twin motors and its own four-litre air tank.

**Powerplant:** Twin motor (12V supply)

**Pressure cut-out switch:** Yes

**Weight (packaged with all accessories):** 15kg

**Cool features:** The portable unit comes standard with a waterproof hard cover carry case. The unit's actual inflation of virtually 2 bar in one minute is spectacular. Quality is outstanding. If you have a tree growing money, this compressor is the obvious choice.

**Not so cool:** Heavy and bulky, and costs a pretty penny.

**Warranty:** Two years

**Price:** R12 650

**Available at:** [www.4x4megaworld.co.za](http://www.4x4megaworld.co.za)

**Result (One minute inflation from complete deflation):** 1,95 bar

## PRODUCT SHOOT-OUT

### AIR COMPRESSORS



#### OFFGRID DUAL HEAD

**Say what?** This dual head product is made in China and has a claimed maximum flow rate of 150 LPM. It comes standard with a heavy duty plastic storage case.

**Powerplant:** Single motor (12V supply)

**Pressure cut-out switch:** Yes

**Weight (including all accessories):** 8,2kg

**Cool features:** The plastic storage case is a bonus, especially at the price

**Not so cool:** The unit's performance was not exactly "wow", but it was still very close to the 160 LPM units.

**Warranty:** One year

**Price:** R1 795

**Available at:** [www.safaricentre.co.za](http://www.safaricentre.co.za)

**Result (One minute inflation from complete deflation):** 0,85 bar



#### Rough & Tough 72 LPM

**Say what?** This brand, hailing from China, is stocked by several 4x4 accessory companies. Selling at a competitive price, the baby pump in this range seemingly offers a lot of pump for not so much money.

**Powerplant:** Single motor (12V supply)

**Pressure cut-out switch:** Yes

**Weight (including all accessories):** 4,4kg

**Cool features:** It's small and compact, and is the most affordable product in this test. Even though it is a budget compressor, it comes standard with all the accessory connections to inflate mattresses and soccer balls and so forth

**Not so cool:** The most affordable product also managed the least amount of air in the allocated minute

**Warranty:** One year

**Price:** R895

**Available at:** [www.lasport.co.za](http://www.lasport.co.za)

**Result (One minute inflation from complete deflation):** 0,55 bar



#### Rough & Tough Twin Head

**Say what?** The Chinese Rough & Tough Twin features two heads, and on paper it promises to be a lot of pump for the money.

**Powerplant:** Single motor (12V supply)

**Pressure cut-out switch:** Yes

**Weight (including all accessories):** 7,6kg

**Cool features:** A unique feature is the separate switch unit, built into the power line. It's the only pump in the test to feature such a switch, for what it's worth

**Not so cool:** Twin heads should equal pretty good air flow, right? Unfortunately this unit was outclassed by some of the smaller 72 LPM pumps.

**Warranty:** One year

**Price:** R1 250

**Available at:** [www.lasport.co.za](http://www.lasport.co.za)

**Result (One minute inflation from complete deflation):** 0,65 bar

### Summary

So the 160 LPM units recorded very close results, which is not a surprise because most of them seem to originate from the same Chinese factory. There are subtle fit and finish differences, as well as a variety of air hoses and attachments, but at the end of the day they are all very much cut from the same cloth.

The smaller 72 LPM units performed as expected – they did okay-ish, but if you plan on using your 72 LPM compressor every weekend to inflate those 33-inch muds, you may have to make a regular Monday morning appointment with your accessory shop to take the unit in for some tender loving care.

For occasional rough roaders who mainly want a compressor as a back-up in case of a puncture, these more affordable and more compact units may be just the ticket.

The two dual head compressors managed to pump less air into the tyre than the 160 LPM units, so they didn't come up to expectations.

And then there was the ARB twin. At R12 650 it is by far the most expensive compressor in this test – but it also inflated the tyre as we've never seen a bakkie tyre being inflated before. Going from 0 to 1,95 bar in just one minute takes some doing!

However, at almost R13 000 it's a rather big investment. It should last a lifetime though, so instead of replacing a compressor every two years or so, you should be able to hand this one down to your children when they start off-roading.

Ditto with the smaller ARB compressor. Although it managed less pressure than the 160 LPM units, you get the impression that it will be able to do the same job for 20 years without breaking a sweat.

So, as always, the best things in life aren't cheap. If we had a money tree, we'd opt for the single motor ARB unit, simply because we wouldn't quite need the performance of the big twin compressor. But, since we're still working on that money tree, we'll opt for one of the 160 LPM compressors.

And because these units are all very much the same, the choice depends on how much money you want to spend, where you think you will receive the best after-sales service, and if you perhaps have an affinity for one specific brand over another. **LW**

### RESULTS

|   |          |
|---|----------|
| 1. ARB High Performance Twin Compressor (CKMTP12) | 1,95 bar |
| 2. Rough & Tough 160 LPM (single motor)           | 1,05 bar |
| 3. Trailboss 160 LPM (single motor)               | 1 bar    |
| Smittybilt 160 LPM                                | 1 bar    |
| 5. T-Max 160 LPM                                  | 0,95 bar |
| 6. ARB High Performance Compressor (CKMP12)       | 0,9 bar  |
| 7. Off Grid Dual Head                             | 0,85 bar |
| 8. Trailboss 72 LPM                               | 0,7 bar  |
| 9. Rough & Tough Dual Head                        | 0,65 bar |
| 10. T-Max 72 LPM                                  | 0,6 bar  |
| 11. Rough & Tough 72 LPM                          | 0,55 bar |





### Rough & Tough 160 LPM

**Say what?** The most expensive brother in the Rough & Tough clan also features the highest claimed flow rate. But will it deliver the goods?

**Powerplant:** Single motor (12V supply)

**Pressure cut-out switch:** Yes

**Weight (including all accessories):** 8,2kg

**Cool features:** Okay, so fancy accessories are sometimes cool. In the case of this unit, we found its simplicity and no-nonsense, ease-of-use approach and packaging the best thing about it. It also performed rather well!

**Not so cool:** Although it certainly has the blasting power (for its size), it may not quite have the lasting power of those expensive ARB units.

**Warranty:** One year

**Price:** R1 499

**Available at:** [www.weca.co.za](http://www.weca.co.za)

**Result (One minute inflation from complete deflation):** 1,05 bar



### Smittybilt Heavy Duty 160 LPM

**Say what?** This American unit, but made in China, looks and feels pretty good in the quality department. It comes with 50 years of brand history, and a big reputation.

**Powerplant:** Single motor (12V supply)

**Pressure cut-out switch:** Yes

**Weight (including all accessories):** 9kg

**Cool features:** The compressor is sturdy and stands on rubber isolators to limit vibrations. It looks good and feels pretty solid, too.

**Not so cool:** It is obvious that this unit hails from the same Chinese factory as some of the other 160 LPM units. The only differences are in the finish, and some of the fittings.

**Warranty:** One year

**Price:** R2 830

**Available at:** [www.onca4x4.co.za](http://www.onca4x4.co.za)

**Result (One minute inflation from complete deflation):** 1 bar



### T-Max 72 LPM

**Say what?** The T-Max units represented the budget side of 4x4 Mega World's compressor range. These units hail from China, and were obviously made along the same design as most of the other Chinese products.

**Powerplant:** Single motor (12V supply)

**Pressure cut-out switch:** Yes

**Weight (including all accessories):** 5,8kg

**Cool features:** It has some cool inter-connecting parts for the air hose.

**Not so cool:** In the end it's all very much the same thing across the Chinese board, with only small differences in accessories and finishes and colours. The unit's performance was so-so.

**Warranty:** One year

**Price:** R1 795

**Available at:** [www.4x4megaworld.co.za](http://www.4x4megaworld.co.za)

**Result (One minute inflation from complete deflation):** 0,6 bar



### T-Max 160 LPM

**Say what?** And another budget arrow in 4x4 Mega World's quiver... This 160 LPM unit is exactly the same as some of the other single motor 160 units in this test.

**Powerplant:** Single motor (12V supply)

**Pressure cut-out switch:** Yes

**Weight (including all accessories):** 9kg

**Cool features:** Like its smaller sibling, the T-Max 160 LPM gets some cool air hose connections.

**Not so cool:** The unit's performance was on a par with the air flow performance of its Chinese cousins... so performance wise it's in the middle of the pack. It certainly gets the job done.

**Warranty:** One year

**Price:** R1 795

**Available at:** [www.4x4megaworld.co.za](http://www.4x4megaworld.co.za)

**Result (One minute inflation from complete deflation):** 0,95 bar



### Trailboss 72 LPM

**Say what?** This budget-friendly, Chinese-made unit may be small but on paper it packs a reasonable punch. But is it suited to that 33-inch tyre? Well, that's another matter.

**Powerplant:** Single motor (12V supply)

**Pressure cut-out switch:** Yes

**Weight (including all accessories):** 4,8kg

**Cool features:** Compact, making for easy travelling. Easy on the wallet, too, and it did outperform a twin-head pump!

**Not so cool:** The pump is not very powerful, so it may be out of its league if you drive a 4x4 with 33-inch tyres. It would make more sense if you drive a soft-roader and want a just-in-case compressor on board.

**Warranty:** Six months

**Price:** R1 000

**Available at:** [www.outdoorwarehouse.co.za](http://www.outdoorwarehouse.co.za)

**Result (One minute inflation from complete deflation):** 0,7 bar



### Trailboss 160 LPM

**Say what?** The bigger Trailboss unit, which also hails from China, has a couple of nifty features – as well as that claimed 160 litres per minute flow rate.

**Powerplant:** Single motor (12V supply)

**Pressure cut-out switch:** Yes

**Weight (including all accessories):** 8,4kg

**Cool features:** Promises to be a great pump at the price... and it delivers with a solid performance. The latest version also has a built-in deflation function.

**Not so cool:** Limited warranty and relatively unknown brand may not be the first choice of fashion-conscious, mine-is-better-than-yours 4x4 folk.

**Warranty:** Six months

**Price:** R1 700

**Available at:** [www.outdoorwarehouse.co.za](http://www.outdoorwarehouse.co.za)

**Result (One minute inflation from complete deflation):** 1 bar



# Focusing on the photo quality

More and more people are leaving their cameras at home, because they believe photographs taken on smartphones are just as good. To find out if this is true, we rounded up the best smartphones for a camera shoot-out

**Text and photography:** Gerhard Horn

**Taking photographs is** an integral part of any real adventure. Whether you use them to reminisce about the past, or brag to your friends about the things you've done, one cannot deny the importance of a good camera to capture the special moments in life.

Here at *Leisure Wheels* we have a nice collection of Canon SLRs with multiple lenses. We still believe in an old-school approach to photography. In other words, we scout locations beforehand and wait for the sun to reach the perfect position to avoid lens flares. But none of this is necessary for the average person, who won't be publishing a photographic account of his travels in a national magazine.

A small digital camera is more than up to the task – or so we used to think. Staff members upgraded to new smartphones earlier in the year and we simply couldn't believe the quality of the photographs they delivered, and apparently without any photography skill being necessary. The latest smartphones come with an "automatic" setting. Rather like Land Rover's Terrain Response system, it will set everything up for you, so you can just sit back and relax. Getting the perfect photograph these days takes nothing more than the push of a button.

We have also noticed a trend among fellow adventurers. The massive SLR hanging from the neck, which used to be the signature look

of any budding adventurer, has been replaced by a bulge in the pocket. Why carry a massive camera when you can just as easily take an epic picture with something you have in your pocket anyway?

Those of you who take photography seriously might not agree with that statement, but consider the fact. The photographs we shoot for *Leisure Wheels* are around 60 megabytes large when we import them into our photography editing software.

Imagine our surprise once we imported the smartphone images, only to find that they too were roughly the same size once we started inspecting them.

The SLR is still the king, when you want



be creative with light and lenses, but do you really need all of that when you just want to take a few snaps of your holiday? That's what we attempted to find out. The project also enabled us to test five of the best smartphones on the SA market in the hope of finding the best one for amateur photographers.

## Methodology

Well, it's fairly simple. We are not technology journalists, so we judged the smartphones

purely on their photographic abilities.

To start, we compiled a list of the most popular smartphones in the business. Our sister publication, *Popular Mechanics*, who are the real boffins when it comes to smartphones, gave us some suggestions and we ended up with a list that consisted of the LG G4, Apple iPhone 6, Huawei P8 and Samsung Galaxy S6 Edge. As a matter of interest, we included a point and shoot entry-level camera as well, if only to see how the

traditional vacation camera fared against the smartphones. We tried to get our hands on a Sony Xperia Z3 as well, but apparently there is a global shortage of media demonstrators.

In the interests of being transparent, we'd like to state that the iPhone 6 belongs to a staff member and we are big Apple fans. This whole magazine is put together on Apple products, but we found a way around any prejudice we might have. We took all of the phones to multiple locations and

## The results in descending order

### 5th place: Huawei P8



|                   |                      |
|-------------------|----------------------|
| Price             | R7 999               |
| Dimensions        | 144.9 x 72.1 x 6.4mm |
| Weight            | 144g                 |
| Screen resolution | 1080 x 1920 pixels   |
| Cameras: Primary  | 13 MP                |
| Secondary         | 8 MP                 |
| Camera score      | 56                   |
| Video score       | 6                    |



#### Comments

"The lack of colour quality lets it down." – Jannie Herbst

"There were eight obvious exposure (aperture) adjustments in 17 seconds.

Quality is okay, as is the sound." – Danie Botha

**Total 62/100**



### 4th place: Canon Ixus 220



|                   |                      |
|-------------------|----------------------|
| Price             | About R1000          |
| Dimensions        | 92.2 x 55.9 x 19.5mm |
| Weight            | 141g                 |
| Screen resolution | n/a                  |
| Cameras: Primary  | 12,1MP               |
| Secondary         | n/a                  |
| Camera score      | 63                   |
| Video score       | 2                    |



#### Comments

"The old-school point and shoot failed to perform well in any area. Operating it was fussy, when you consider how easy it is to use a smartphone these days." – Gerhard Horn

**Total 65/100**



# SHOOT-OUT

## SMARTPHONE CAMERAS

### 3rd place: iPhone 6



|                   |                   |
|-------------------|-------------------|
| Price             | R9 599            |
| Dimensions        | 38.1x 67 x 6.9mm  |
| Weight            | 129g              |
| Screen resolution | 750 x 1334 pixels |
| Cameras: Primary  | 8MP               |
| Secondary         | 1,2MP             |
| Camera score      | 68                |
| Video score       | 7,5               |



#### Comments

"The iPhone scored second best overall in low light." – Jannie Herbst  
 "Slightly grainy in places, and the exposure is not consistent. Overall quality of video and sound is not too shabby." – Danie Botha

**Total 75,5/100**



shot the same photograph on each phone within seconds of each other. These images were downloaded and presented to our photography guru, Jannie Herbst.

Jannie started his first job as a photographer in 1967 and has won the South African Guild of Motoring Journalists' Photographer of the Year title more than once. If anyone can spot a shoddy photo, it's him.

#### Categories

There are obviously different kinds of photographs and we took this into account. In

order to get a score out of 100, we judged the phones in three different categories, which are representative of the photos people take most often.

The first and most important photo is the standard action or landscape shot – in other words, the kind of photo you'd take of a magnificent view like the Victoria Falls, or a watering hole with various wildlife.

Next up we have the night shot, or the kind of photo you take at braai. It's a difficult shot to get with an SLR camera, but all of the smartphones had a special setting for taking

photographs in the dark.

Last, but certainly not least, is the "selfie". Years ago the photographer had to be excluded from the picture, but the smartphone gives us the ability to capture ourselves with a front-mounted camera.

As an adventurer, you might come across a scene where a photograph simply wouldn't be enough to capture everything. Imagine a lioness grabbing hold of a springbok in the bushveld. In a situation like that, you'd want a video. This particular section counted 10 points, and we left the job of judging it to

### 2nd place: LG G4



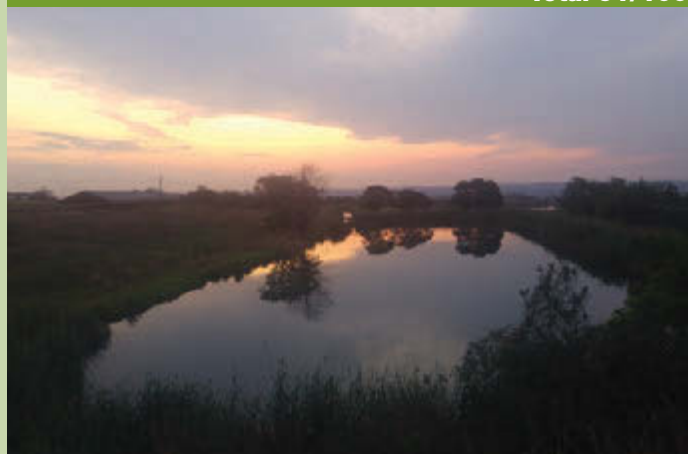
|                   |                      |
|-------------------|----------------------|
| Price             | R7 299               |
| Dimensions        | 148.9 x 76.1 x 6.3mm |
| Weight            | 155g                 |
| Screen resolution | 1440 x 2560 pixels   |
| Cameras: Primary  | 16MP                 |
| Secondary         | 8MP                  |
| Camera score      | 83                   |
| Video score       | 8                    |



#### Comments

"The LG G4 is the winner when it comes to the business of taking 'selfies', and it took the best motion shot. It delivered the sharpest photo with the least motion blur. The colours are also nicely balanced." – Jannie Herbst  
 "Excellent video quality." – Danie Botha

**Total 91/100**





Danie Botha. In addition to being a valuable part of our editorial team, Danie dabbles in the world of television production, so he knows a decent video when he sees one.

The rest of the photographs were scored out of 30, which brought the total to a nice round 100.

## Last word

Rather annoyingly, our beloved iPhone finished in third place!

The smartphones performed admirably and left the editor suitably impressed. Their performance versus that of an average point and shoot also leaves little doubt that there's

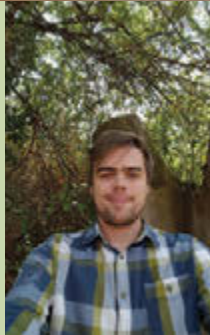
no sense in still carrying a conventional camera around, unless you're a die-hard photographer.

We didn't factor cost into the shoot-out, but a mere two points separated the LG from the Samsung. Considering the fact that it's a lot less expensive, the LG might just be the best all-round buy. **LW**

## The winner: Samsung Galaxy S6 Edge



|                   |                     |
|-------------------|---------------------|
| Price             | R10 999             |
| Dimensions        | 142.1 x 70.1 x 7 mm |
| Weight            | 132g                |
| Screen resolution | 1440 x 2560 pixels  |
| Cameras: Primary  | 16MP                |
| Secondary         | 5MP                 |
| Camera score      | 84                  |
| Video score       | 9                   |



## Comments

"The Samsung Galaxy S6 Edge scored consistently well, with both the 'selfie' and motion shot scoring second place with high marks. The low light shot impressed me the most. The colours, even in the shaded areas, are distinguishable and it also has the best contrast out of the lot." – Jannie Herbst.

"Excellent all-round performance... quality, sound and stability all excellent." – Danie Botha.

**Total 93/100**



**After enhancing**

The Samsung Galaxy S6 Edge does an impressive job all by itself, but one can always fiddle with photographs to make them even better. We decided to illustrate this by taking the Edge's low light image and juicing it up with a few easy tricks from Photoshop. Note the wide range of colours and the detail in the previously darkened areas.



# LEDs versus fluorescent camping lights

Many people believe that LED lights are the way forward for camping, but in certain areas, the good old fluorescent light still does a better job

Text and photography: Grant Spolander

**Modern society is** obsessed with technology, so much so that we often get caught up in “progress” and mistakenly assume that the old ways are inferior to the new. LED lighting is a great example: it’s bright, efficient and lasts almost forever... but does it really provide better light?

Some users find LED lights to be glary, harsh on the eyes and cold when it comes to colour. The same people often prefer old-school fluorescent lighting, which is well-diffused,

warm in colour, and far more ambient in its delivery.

So, which is better? Are LEDs automatically the better choice, or do fluorescent lights still have something to offer the outdoor traveller?

Oddly, it seems that the retail industry has made this decision for you. These days it’s almost impossible to buy a new 12V fluorescent camping light. In fact, the only company that still manufactures 12V fluorescent camping lights is National Luna – a

South-African-based company that specialises in 12V refrigeration, dual-battery systems and outdoor lighting.

National Luna was once an industry leader in 12V fluorescent lights but, when LED technology hit the market, its fluorescent light sales plummeted. It seemed that no one was interested in this old technology, and the move towards LED lighting was rapid and complete.

Needless to say, National Luna was forced to take note and, after several years of extensive



National Luna's new Weather Proof LED boasts a variety of class-leading features. These include water resistance, dual-colour capability, a touchpad power button that is back-lighted so that you can find it in the dark and – best of all – a battery-protection device that automatically shuts the light off as a safety measure.



research, development and product testing, the South African brand finally launched its own 12V LED camping light. The unit was a great success, and much like their fluorescent product line, was heralded as a global leader.

However, despite its achievements in the LED market, National Luna continues to manufacture a wide selection of 12V fluorescent lights. They do this not only to provide back-up service for old-school caravan owners, but also because they believe that fluorescent lights still have something to offer campers and the general outdoor market.

On paper, a comparison between National Luna's new 18-LED weather proof light and their previously popular Little Luna fluorescent light will quickly reveal a performance winner. Although the Little Luna is marketed as an 8-watt unit, its actual power output is 9.41 watts. This translates into a total light output of 440 lumens, at 47 lumens per watt, and 784 mA.

By comparison, the 18-LED light (on its brightest setting) features 4.46 watts, at 547 lumens, and just 390 mA. However, the light also boasts a touch-activated dimmer switch, which allows you to choose between three brightness levels and/or power consumption settings.

Again, on paper, it's clear that the 18-LED light is far more efficient, sporting 122 lumens per watt compared with the fluorescent's 47 lumens per watt. However, in terms of real-life performance, you can expect less diffusion, sharper shadows and slightly more glare from the LED unit. The fluorescent light may seem dull in comparison, but what it lacks in brightness it makes up for in all-round ambience and unintrusive light.

As far as features and versatility are concerned, it must be said that the weather proof LED is also a dual colour light. It features 18 warm-white LEDs, as well as 12 red or orange LEDs. (The choice of colour is yours.) In other words, the weather proof LED boasts multiple brightness settings and power consumption levels which vary from 390 mA to as little as 36 mA.

The LED unit is also water resistant (IP66), and sports a glow-in-the-dark power switch that is activated by a touch pad.

In the end, whichever light you choose is a matter of personal preference, but if you are undecided perhaps space, longevity, efficiency and durability should be the deciding factors. In that case, the LED unit is the glaringly obvious answer. **LW**

| SPECIFICATIONS                              | LITTLE LUNA     | 18-LED*             |
|---|-----------------|---------------------|
| • PRICE                                     | R275            | R354                |
| • DIMENSIONS                                | 432 x 58 x 77mm | 250 x 38 x 12mm     |
| • BRIGHTNESS LEVELS                         | ONE             | LOW / MEDIUM / HIGH |
| • WATTS                                     | 9.41            | 0.62 / 2.36 / 4.46  |
| • LUMENS                                    | 440             | 75 / 284 / 547      |
| • LUMENS PER WATT                           | 47              | 120 / 120 / 122     |
| • CURRENT DRAW                              | 784 mA          | 50 / 195 / 390 mA   |
| • POTENTIAL RUNTIME ON A DEEP-CYCLE BATTERY | 127 HOURS       | 2 000 HOURS OR MORE |
| • VOLTAGE RANGE                             | 10.5 - 14.5 Vdc | 10 - 30 VDC         |
| • DUAL COLOUR                               | NO              | YES*                |
| • WEATHER-PROOF                             | NO              | IP66 RATED          |

\* The figures listed here do not include those of the 12 red or orange LEDs, which offer an even lower current draw.



Unlike most LEDs, the National Luna unit has been designed as a relatively warm white light.





# M/Ts versus A/Ts

## Which should you buy?

At some point in your off-road life you may reach a crossroads: should you stick with all-terrain (A/T) tyres, or go the mud-terrain (M/T) route? But before you dive into a boggy pit of regret, there are a few questions worth asking. These start with: why?

Text and photography: Grant Spolander

**Why do you** want M/T tyres? It's not something many people like to admit, but in most cases, M/Ts are fitted for fashion, rather than function.

Of course, there's nothing wrong with this decision (everyone to their own), but

a problem often arises when users don't know what they are getting themselves into. Generally speaking, the problems (read: complaints) start with noise.

Although some tyre brands may be marginally quieter than others, on the whole, M/Ts are noisy. It's the price you pay for that extra off-road traction.

The noise generated from an M/T tyre has different

origins. The larger lugs (and greater voids) are not as seamless when they contact the road and surprisingly, the tyres also generate considerable wind noise, much like a fan.

In most cases, the more aggressive the tread design, the more noise the tyre will make. So, if you're worried about your vehicle's NVH levels, forget the M/Ts and stick with a modern A/T tread design.

Where there's noise, there's often vibration, too. This doesn't necessarily mean that an M/T tyre will cause bolts to fall off your vehicle, but you can expect a slight resonance to be transferred through your 4x4's steering system. Again, if the thought of this bothers you, do not fit M/Ts.

There's no hard and fast rule, but as far as percentages go, most A/T tread designs are 70% biased towards on-road use. The other 30% is reserved for off-road. In the case of mud-terrains, the ratio swings the other way – usually 80% off-road, and 20% on.

The exception to this generalisation is Cooper Tyre's new S/T Maxx, a thoroughbred all-terrain which offers a very close 60/40 split, erring on the off-road side. It's what you



The Cooper S/T Maxx features an integrated 4- and 5-rib design, meaning that the pattern alternates between four and five lugs along the tread width. The more ribs there are, the quieter the tyre will run.





would call a niche tyre as there aren't many tread patterns out there that are similarly designed. Nonetheless, any tyre that's off-road focused will not match the tar-driving performance (handling and safety) of a well-designed A/T.

To be clear, most handling and safety compromises will be felt on wet tar. General day-to-day driving (braking and cornering) will not be drastically affected by fitting M/Ts. However, regardless of how wet or dry the road surface may be, an M/T tyre is not designed for high-speed cornering and braking. Not only will the tyre underperform when compared with an A/T or H/T tyre but the tread itself may suffer irreparable damage in the way of cuts, chips and tearing of the lugs.

This raises the subject of durability. One of the strongest arguments for wanting to fit a set of M/Ts is for the added durability they provide off-road. The secret to their durability lies in their carcass construction, and the fact that they are usually made with thicker sidewalls, more rubber, and a tougher compound. The downside to this increase in durability is their weight and flexibility.

The stronger a tyre, the more

rigid it will be, and the less comfortably it will ride. Weight, on the other hand, adds to fuel consumption. Added wind resistance (of the tread pattern) also plays a minor role.

At this stage, with so many negative features piling up against the fitment of M/Ts, you may be wondering why anyone would consider the move. While it may be true that A/Ts are the more logical, day-to-day option, you'd need only experience the incredible traction-advantage of an M/T to know why so many off-road enthusiasts make the change.

What's more, for many 4x4 owners, the fitment of M/Ts is a declaration – a statement to other road-users that says, "I drive off-road". In other words, it's the less tactless equivalent of spray-on mud!

But regardless of your reasons for wanting to go the M/T route, the important thing to remember is that there is no such thing as a quiet, comfortable, wet-tar performing mud-terrain. No matter what the brochure says, M/Ts will affect the way your 4x4 drives on a daily basis.

So, if you suspect that you may be a high-maintenance vehicle owner – one that's acutely aware of any new knock, noise or vibration the car may make – it would probably be best to steer clear of the M/T route. **LW**



The Cooper STT mud-terrain sports a 4-rib design, for better self-cleaning and mud ejection. This tyre is due to be replaced by the new STT Pro, as shown in the opening photograph.



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# The right stuff!

Racing legend Hannes Grobler, manager of the 4x4 Mega World Zambesi branch in Montana, Pretoria. Grobler's advice to clients is certainly of the "no bull" variety.



It's been six years since racing legend Hannes Grobler started as manager of the 4x4 Mega World Zambesi branch in the north of Pretoria. Now the business is well established, with a steady stream of loyal customers. Excellent service and products and a no-nonsense approach seem to be the big drawcards that keep the clients coming back

**Hannes Grobler is** not one to mince his words. If the former racing legend doesn't find a particular product useful or up to standard in an overland environment, he tells a potential client exactly that, even if it means losing a lucrative sale. For Grobler, it is about the long-term support and satisfaction of the client, not making a quick buck.

"Sometimes we have people who walk in here with a big wallet. If they look at compressors, for instance, they want the R13 000 unit rather than the R5000 one, just because they can afford it.

"Then we ask them what they want to use it for, and more often than not they just don't need the capacity of the more expensive pump," says Grobler.

We are chatting in his well-stocked shop, which is part of the Montana Value Centre complex next to Sefako Makgatho Drive (formerly Zambesi Drive).

Grobler is an overland enthusiast, and takes his kitted Volkswagen Amarok to the Kruger National Park as often as he can for some camping and a restful break.

He often takes new products with him, to test them in a real world camping environment.

"When you test a camping chair or a compressor or a kettle in the environment it was designed for, you quickly get a much clearer picture of how good or bad it is," says Grobler.

But there is the other side of the coin – when saving a few pennies today is not always a sound decision in the long run.

"We also get clients with tight wallets who look at the price tag first and want to spend as little as possible on camping equipment. Sometimes this works out well for the customers, and they get a good product at a good price. But you have to look at the

application, too. If someone wants to buy a R500 compressor to inflate his customised 4x4's 38-inch tyres, we'll tell him straight out that he is wasting his money."

Not that all clients are willing to listen to advice. Grobler has seen a few stubborn people walk in on a Friday to buy a certain product for a certain job. And no matter what the sales staff say, he will buy that product. Then the same client storms into the shop on a Monday morning, demanding to know how they can sell "inferior" products!

"It's the same with vehicle accessories," says Grobler. "A client walks in and decides that a new ARB bull bar will be just dandy for his bakkie. This is great news from a retail perspective, of course, but we ask about suspension upgrades that have been done or that are planned... fitting a heavy bull bar to a bakkie with standard factory suspension will have a major effect on handling, braking and safety."

If the vehicle has standard suspension, the 4x4 Mega World staff will suggest a suspension upgrade too, along with the new bull bar (that may also include a heavy winch). That's where the size of the customer's wallet comes in!

So a sound knowledge of the mechanics of suspensions and other upgrades is essential if you sell these items, and this is knowledge

that Grobler and his team of enthusiastic salesmen certainly share.

The shop's fitment centre, in the same premises, installs all the accessories, with Grobler keeping an eye on proceedings. For the former national rally and off-road champion, the quality of workmanship is non-negotiable.

"You are only as good as your last job," he says. "Most of our regulars have come to us after hearing about us from their friends or business associates. Building a business on a solid reputation is very important to us."

And judging by the steady flow of clients in the shop these days, Grobler's no-bull approach in dealing with his customers is certainly paying dividends. **LW**

More information: Tel 012 548-2371;  
e-mail [hannes@megaworldzambesi.co.za](mailto:hannes@megaworldzambesi.co.za)





# Solo trip through Karoo-heaven

You might have heard people say that the best parts of the Karoo are the Shell Ultra Cities. Or that it is so flat that on a Monday you can already see Wednesday on the horizon. They won't believe you when you tell them the Karoo has the most amazing gravel road passes

Text and photography:  
Willem van der Berg

Gannaga Pass is a gravel masterpiece. Take it slowly around the corners, because it is very narrow and you won't see oncoming traffic.



**Travel** is like religion. Some do it for a living. Others do not understand the fuss. Some take it very seriously and others in their stride.

Some trust in the GPS. Others say it will take you to hell – the only way forward is with a map. A lot of travellers like to plan their trips in every detail, while a small charismatic group says, “No, have faith. Let the road decide.”

The point is, travel is a big thing. We have strong views on how it should be done. We all do it differently, but in the end, we all meet up in Beaufort West.

I like to have a basic route and plan, but I also like desolate back roads – the more *tweespoor*, the better. I am definitely part of

that small, charismatic group, and I love maps.

I don't like having a lot of people around me, especially when I'm on the road. Yes, I'm a Lone Ranger, but that does not mean I'm lonely. It's just so much easier to travel alone, or with one good friend or my wife. It gives me a better chance to take that random turn-off or set up camp on a beautiful spot next to a lonely little road.

But stopping, getting out, opening the farm gate, getting back in, stopping, getting out again, closing the gate, getting in and pulling away for the fifth time on the road between Loxton and Beaufort West makes me wish I had some help... I mean, company. This road winds through farms, past *windpompe* and





crows on fences. In a while it will take me over the Trapvoet Pass. It's the first of a few Karoo gravel passes, and I'll tackle it in the Chevrolet Trailblazer in the next four days. We'll be doing a circular route starting in Carnarvon today and will go through Beaufort West, Merweville, Sutherland, the Tankwa Karoo, Middelpos and then head back to Carnarvon. The only tar we'll be driving on will be in those towns.

This area between Loxton and Beaufort West is the only place where the endangered riverine rabbit can be found. But you'll be very lucky to see one of these big rabbits with the woolly tails because there are only around 250 left. I don't see any. And I don't see much other life on the small gravel road I take about halfway between Loxton and Beaufort West.

This road connects with the N1 near Three Sisters, but I take another gravel road towards Beaufort West and then turn off on this *tweespoor* towards the blueish mountains where Trapvoet awaits. Just after gate eight I see a bundle of sheep coming up the road, followed by three men on foot and a small blue tractor. I make way for the merinos and meet up with Hans Jonkers, Johannes Jonkers, Raymond Bezuidenhout and Jan Berg. They have come all the way from those blue mountains and will be leaving the sheep on another farm just down the road. Then the tractor will take them back.

When I tell them I want to go up Trapvoet

Pass the men look quite sceptical, doubting the Trailblazer. "You think he will get up there?" Raymond asks Hans. Hans frowns, "Only if it has lock diff." Well, no, the Trailblazer does not have any lock diffs or rather, diff locks. But the traction control does an excellent job and the Blazer is, of course, four wheel drive. I defend my case. Hans still frowns, not impressed.

"No man," Jan joins the debate. "Kobus went up Trapvoet in his Hilux the other day. Surely this car can also?" I totally agree with Jan. I won't let a Hilux beat the Blazer.

At gate nine I take four cold Cokes from my cooler bag and leave them there as I know the blue tractor will be returning in a while. Then I continue and go through some more gates until I reach the farm Matjiesfontein, where Trapvoet starts. It follows a ravine up the mountain and is only a *tweespoor* track. There are some loose rocks on the steep inclines, but with the Trailblazer in 4H the traction control is still active and prevents any wheel spin.

I now know why Hans asked about the "lock diff". It's a real farm mountain pass – no spectacular bends and a lot of zig zagging to the summit. There's a long, almost straight climb, one very sharp bend to the right and then another long climb.

The views from the top are stunning. You feel like the king of the mountain up here. That's how I feel, until I reach a gate – locked with a chain and a big, brand new lock.

A vicious cold front is suddenly rolling

down the rocky slopes, blacking out the afternoon sun and hitting me with sleet as I stand at the gate, holding the lock in my hand and waiting for it to miraculously pop open. Nothing happens.

Turning back seems like the only option. But goodness, all those gates waiting for me... This is a public road and I get the feeling that the key should be hidden somewhere near the gate. I begin my search. Forget about that "king of the mountain" feeling. I find the key – I'm 007 in an instant!

I drive on. The Trailblazer is now loaded with secret weapons and all sorts of life-saving gadgets. The misty conditions provide the perfect setting for the movie playing out in my head.

My *tweespoor* and farm gate excitement ends for the day at the R381 between Beaufort West and Loxton. From here the Molteno Pass takes me down the Nuweveld Mountains to Beaufort. My plan to camp in the Karoo National Park is cancelled as I drive into a cold, wet, windy and an already dark town. A lot of guest houses have signs outside saying they are fully booked, but luckily Die Herehuis has one of its very smart rooms available and I check in.

Molteno Pass is a real mud bath the next morning. It has been raining through the night and it's still raining. The mist fills the ravine along the pass, hiding the sharp drop-offs next to the road, and the kudus. Just after reaching the summit, I drive through a big

On back roads through the Karoo you don't follow the maxim, "Keep left and pass right". You drive carefully, and make way for farm activities.







Piet le Roux, who farms near Fraserburg, takes a smoke break and checks that his young merino rams on the truck are okay.

and beautiful plateau on top of the Nuweveld mountains. It's still very cloudy, but the rain and mist have cleared.

I leave the plateau and R381 and turn left onto a small gravel road towards Fraserburg – a lovely road with smooth bends and curves around ridges.

Closer to Fraserburg I find a small truck with a trailer fully loaded with sheep parked in the road. An old *omie* is hanging from the side of the double deck truck like a weaverbird from a nest.

"Just checking if they are all okay," says the oom when I stop. He introduces himself as "Le Roux, Piet le Roux". But on the old brown army jacket he is wearing, "v.d. Merwe" is printed in thick black letters above the right pocket.

Oom Piet and his two sons all farm in the area and together run a merino stud. Piet points to the light blue truck and trailer. "These are young stud rams and I'm taking them to another farm where we monitor them closely to select the best."

While he's telling me about their problems with jackals, Piet lights his pipe. White clouds of smoke escape from his mouth and nose as the conversation turns to the weather.

"One of my neighbours has a farm south of Sutherland and he says a thick mist hangs over the Roggeveld Mountains every morning. I said to him that all that moisture surely means a great summer with good rains. He said no, that's the thing. That will be

the last moisture we see. We are heading for a drought."

Oom Piet says there's nothing to do but wait and see, while hoping and praying for the best. "It's the Karoo. It won't be our first drought."

Not far from where I said goodbye to Oom Piet and his young rams I turn left, to the south and away from Fraserburg. Oukloof Pass, with its crazy cliffs surrounding you on the narrow track, takes you through

the mountains again. The road follows the Koekemoers River. It is mainly dry, with only a few puddles in which the Trailblazer can make a splash. Should this region get some rain it would be a whole different story, and my guess is that you would not be able to get through Oukloof.

On the other side of the pass the road still follows the river. It's here that a farmer first saw the spoor of the lion that escaped from the Karoo National Park in June this year. The



Teenage Bostander and his son, Joshua, were the only "traffic" in Merweville's main street at 4:52pm.





A few examples of the magnificent scenery Willem encountered on his journey through the Karoo's various passes.

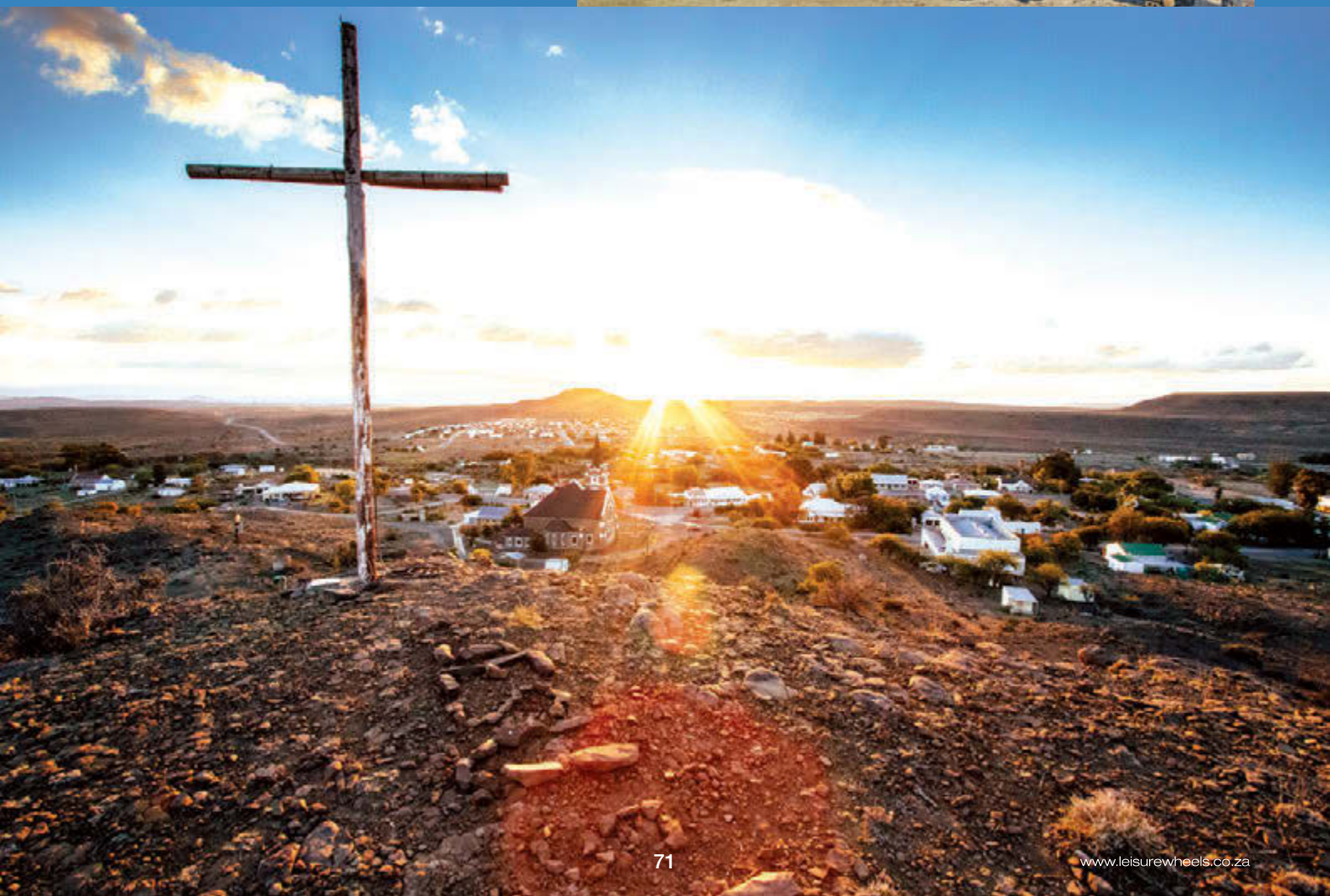




Above: Long before the Amarok there was the Golf. And the old Golfs still kick up dust in the Karoo, like this blue one between Middelpoos and Williston.

Right: Merweville's windpomp mechanic, Koos Melanie.

Below: When everyone is asleep and all the houses are dark, this cross provides the only light in Merweville.







WILLISTON

CALVINIA

Ouberg Pass



Oukloof Pass

MIDDELPOS

Gannaga Pass

TANKWA KAROO  
NATIONAL PARK  
*Tweespoor  
gravel road to  
Tankwa Park*

Ouberg  
Pass

SUTHERLAND

Amandelnek Pass

Camped  
in Tankwa

Onder-Wadrif  
road turn-off

*Tweespoor joins  
gravel road to Ceres*

Trapvoet Pass





CARNAVON

LOXTON

FRASERBURG

Oukloof  
Pass

Trapvoet Pass

Molteno Pass

KAROO  
NATIONAL PARK

Karelsplaas  
Pass

MERWEVILLE

Karelskraal Pass

Molteno Pass

Between Oukloof and Merweville

Beaufort West to Oukloof Pass



young male became known as Sylvester and took a 26-day hiking adventure through this part of the Karoo. He walked in a big circle of around 400km before being caught high up in the mountains near Oukloof. On his way he killed 23 sheep and a massive kudu.

Next to the road, in the middle of nowhere, a small black plate with bright yellow letters announces, "Selfoon ontvangs". I stop and hold up my phone. A three-bar Vodacom reception appears on the screen. Did Sylvester perhaps make a call from here? Or have a look at Google maps to see which direction he should go?

The Trailblazer's tyres only briefly touch tar as we cross the R353 between Fraserburg and Leeu Gamka. A wide, smooth and very straight gravel road takes me to Merweville. More farm than town with *windpompe* everywhere, but no street lights. The afternoon traffic consists of a few people on bicycles and a donkey cart.

There's only one small shop, Muller



How's that for a photo bomb? A peacock shows off behind Kerneels Jacobs' big smile on the farm, Banksgate, near Karelsplaas Pass.

Handelaars. I go in to have a look and come out with my accommodation booked for the night. At the back of the shop are a few rooms and there's a braai outside. My slip says, "Koup Guest House", and for only R170 it sounds quite dodgy, but it's actually not too bad.

Across the gravel street is a building with big wooden doors that have taken years of beating from the harsh Karoo sun. Inside I see someone busy at a bench vice. It is Koos

Melanie, the local *windpomp* mechanic.

Koos is a man of few words and when he's busy he does everything at a relaxed and steady pace. "This is the brake," he says as he points to something clamped in the vice that looks similar to the braking pad of a car's drum brake. This one has a chain attached to it. "When you pull the chain, you brake the wheel," Koos explains. It's 5pm and he begins to pack away his tools. Still in no hurry.

Late afternoon chats are about the weather, rugby, bakkies, a farm that's been sold, a friend who is ill and the children who live far away from Merweville.





At the back of the Dutch Reformed Church is a rocky hill with a big cross on top of it – Merweville's very own Golgotha. It's the perfect spot to sit down with a beer and watch the sun burn out in the west. Beneath you Merweville lies in its totality. Relaxed. No sudden movements. No unnecessary sounds. The church bell rings six times and then the sun disappears.

It's before dawn when I open the farm gate next to the gravel road I arrived on yesterday. From this gate, about 7km north of Merweville, a *tweespoor* track will take me all the way to Sutherland. I'll be going over the Nuweveld Mountains one last time, via the Karelsplaas Pass. The better known gravel road between Merweville and Sutherland runs almost parallel to this track and goes over the mountain via the narrow Rammelkop Pass. I've driven that before, and it's a beauty.

Sunrise is a spectacular event, with the mountains ahead getting painted a bright orange. Dark, misty clouds float on top. I love roads like this. There's no traffic, but you can't drive fast. With your window open you can smell the veld and hear when a black korhaan flies over you, making that characteristic "ke-kwêkke-ke-kwêkke" sound as if it's an old fighter plane shooting the crap out of some invisible enemy.

On roads like this you meet great people, like Kerneels Jacobs on the farm Banksgate. With the road going straight through the house yard and Kerneels standing at the shed, it's just good manners to stop.

Kerneels is chief in charge at Banksgate because the owner lives in Cape Town. No, he and his wife don't get lonely here all by themselves, Kerneels says. "We've got a radio to listen to. And a bakkie if we want to go to town." But none of the three vehicles they have on the farm, are in a good enough condition to reach Sutherland or Merweville at the moment. One bakkie is standing in the veld with a problem, a Hilux in the shed is "hanging to the left" with a broken rear leaf blade and the small Asian jeep is only good enough to use on the farm. "You never know if it's going to start," Kerneels says, and climbs in to give it a go. After a while it starts. "Ah, it's in a good mood today," he laughs.

A few kilometres from Banksgate the road starts climbing up the Nuweveld Mountains. This is the start of Karelskraal Pass. There are no serious inclines or treacherous drop offs, but an amazing view from the summit. And loads of fresh air. Stop, choose a rock to sit on and enjoy. You won't experience such beauty and complete silence in many other places.

Sutherland's fuel pumps are closed between 1pm and 2pm – true platteland style. It's a great excuse to have lunch at the Oude Meul restaurant. Their massive burger keeps me busy long enough. With a full stomach and tank, I head the Trailblazer towards the famous Ouberg Pass, west of Sutherland.

Standing on top of Ouberg you can see right across the enormous open space of the Tankwa Karoo to the Cederberg Mountains, which look like a massive grey and hazy wave

coming at you.

Ouberg drops you down the Roggeveld Mountains into the Tankwa. And while dropping, the temperature rises, from 14°C to 19°C.

Here in the Tankwa I like to camp. But not at a camping site or where people want to chat about politics and rugby. Places like the Tankwa are my Mecca. My Nirvana. Here I want to experience absolute peace and true nature. Things you won't get back in Bloemfontein, Johannesburg, your office, in your car while waiting for a robot to go green or at a braai with your friends.

As I'm following the Tankwa River to Amandelnek pass I'm on the lookout for a good camping spot. Amandelnek is only a small poort and I'm through it in a flash.

From here the road splits. To the left a gravel road that joins the R354 between Sutherland and Matjiesfontein and to the right a gravel road that goes down to Ceres. And right there in the split is a *tweespoor* track heading west. This track later joins the road to Ceres and this is obviously my choice.

A few kilometres further I find the perfect spot. A beautiful, wide open plain with stunning views on the surrounding mountains. And a *windpomp* for company.

After another glorious sunrise I continue with the *tweespoor* track until I reach the gravel road to Ceres. About 25km down this road I take the Onder-Wadrif road to the right. There are a few gates that have to be opened and closed, but there are no other

The misty Nuweveld Mountains and the spectacular Karelsplaas Pass will blow your mind.





What a splendid feeling to be on an unknown *tweespoor* road like this one between Merweville and Sutherland at the dawn of day. Not knowing what lies ahead or where the day will end makes travelling on the Karoo's back roads a great adventure. Below: You might end up in a hidden spot like this, in the Tankwa region.

SUVs kicking up dust in front of me. And there are some awesome views over the Tankwa's dry flats, which are now covered with patches of small yellow flowers. Along the bigger gravel road through the Tankwa National Park there are even more flowers – a great sight as the Tankwa normally is very dry and dusty, not showing much sign of life.

Gannaga and Ouberg are two legendary gravel passes that lure a lot of travellers to this part of the country. While Ouberg is the wild one, built by farmers, Gannaga is one of Thomas Bain's masterpieces.

The narrow road twists and turns out of the Tankwa and up the Roggeveld mountains. From the top you have splendid views down the pass and over the Tankwa. In the distance you'll see the Cederberg wave still coming.

About 30km from Gannaga is Middelpos. This is in fact a farm with a hotel, small shop, fuel pumps, police station and 50 post boxes. I wanted to sleep over at the classic Middelpos Hotel, but when I phoned the owner, Helena van der Westhuizen, a few days before she said the hotel was fully booked. So I carry on, with some great gravel roads to Williston. And

then the very straight R63 to Carnarvon.

There's a great and cosy atmosphere in the Lord's Kitchen in Carnarvon. I'm having the best springbok carpaccio I have ever tasted and outside a thunderstorm is lighting up the Karoo night and soaking the bossieveld. At the table next to me a family close their eyes as a young man begins to pray, "Dear Lord, we want to thank you for this lovely food and we don't know how to thank you enough for this heavenly rain."

And for some unspoiled nature and seldom travelled *tweespoor*. Amen. **LW**





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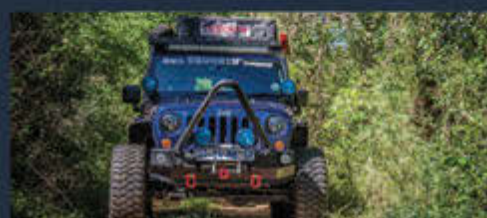
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# Off-road competition goes international

With the Spirit of Africa competition proving such a success locally, VW decided to take it international. The South African teams did rather well

Text: Gerhard Horn Photography: Supplied

**The inaugural Spirit of Amarok** International Trophy recently took place in Botswana with the aim of finding the world's best off-roaders. There were 20 teams – from Australia, Botswana, Namibia and SA.

Teams from Australia, Botswana, Namibia and South Africa took part in the competition and each country was represented by five teams comprising of two people. The 20 teams used Amaroks to contest technical and speed challenges over five days.

"The concept of the international competition is based on the principles of the Spirit of Africa Trophy, which are aimed at testing the 4x4 technical skills and abilities of the drivers in some of Africa's toughest terrain, including steep dongas, rocky ascents and plunging valleys," said Sarel van der Merwe, the man behind the Spirit of Africa event.

The teams used Amarok double cabs in the 30 challenges spread over five days. As with the Spirit of Africa event, the contest was divided into two categories, technical and speed.

The speed challenge simulated motorsport rally stages with long narrow farm style paths. Meanwhile, the technical challenge involved extreme off-road conditions with deep sand and hairy inclines and declines.



Alwyn Jordaan and Melanie Barnard from Namibia won the individual category.

The five South African teams dominated the competition from the start and amassed 10 153 points to take the overall trophy. Team SA were followed by Team Namibia, with Australia and Botswana finishing third and fourth respectively.

The individual category was won by Alwyn and Melanie Jordaan of Namibia, following up on their success in the 2015 Spirit of Africa Trophy. They showed immense concentration

and exceptional driving skills to win one of the toughest international amateur 4x4 challenges in Africa. Juan Grant and Conrad Herbst (South Africa) finished in the second place. The third position in the individual category went to Juan Engelbrecht and Eugene Thornhill (South Africa).

Juan Grant and Conrad Herbst (SA) were second, followed by Juan Engelbrecht and Eugene Thornhill (SA).

"The international Spirit of Amarok competition was much tougher than Spirit of Africa finals," said Alwyn. "The layout and format demanded total concentration and precise driving skills.

"We are excited and honoured to be the first individual winners. It has not yet sunk in that we are the 2015 double champions after winning both the Spirit of Africa and Spirit of Amarok. Hopefully this will encourage more Namibians to participate in the future. The Australians had a massive jol as well, according to one of the finalists, Pat Callinan. "We felt incredibly warmly welcomed by the whole VW South Africa crew, the other competitors and Sarel's team. Every Aussie competitor had a blast. As the "newcomers" to the competition, on the first day we felt out of our depth in terms of the new rules and techniques required but we



quickly adapted to become competitive. The event itself was extremely professionally run. The food was brilliant, the judges were fair, and the driving courses were awesome. If we ever run the Spirit of Amarok in Australia, we'll have a lot to live up to! And the almost unsung hero, the Amarok – rocked! To be belted around the tough terrain and have zero mechanical failures across 20 vehicles, is quite awesome in my books. Not to mention its abilities off-road – it's amazing! Overall, it was an incredible experience. As tourists, we were keen to experience the African wildlife, and that little dream of safari was fulfilled nicely while getting to compete in such an exciting competition.

"It was a privilege to participate in the international competition against contestants from as far across the globe as Australia, and to be hosted by the legendary motorsport driver Sarel van der Merwe," said Alwyn.

The international competition is planned to be an annual event, with other countries where the Amarok is sold showing an interest following the success of the inaugural event. "What we all got to experience here was a peerlessly run event under Sarel's expert tuition; for the Australian teams, it was an amazing opportunity to truly experience the full capability of the Amarok in a highly competitive and challenging yet fun environment. We'd be honoured to be invited back again next year, and have every plan to make our local qualifying event bigger and better in 2016, to come a little closer to the South African calibre of drivers we encountered," said Ralph Beckman, marketing manager, Volkswagen Commercial Vehicles Australia.



Above: The competition consisted of both technical off-road driving, as well as timed rally-like stages. Below: The 20 teams who took part in the inaugural Spirit of Amarok competition consisted of teams from SA, Botswana and Namibia.

"Volkswagen Commercial Vehicles is proud to announce that the Spirit of Amarok Trophy is planned to be an annual event, with more countries expressing an interest in competing in 2016," said Jaco Steenekamp, general manager, sales and marketing. "We are excited to have been instrumental in setting up the first international amateur championship for precision 4x4 driving.

"We felt that the event was the perfect opportunity to showcase the off-road capabilities of the Amarok in an environment where this is better experienced than explained.

"Overall, the competition was an excellent demonstration of how the Amarok brand's philosophy of tough and smart could translate into something as big as an international driving competition." **lw**





4X4 TRAIL  
OU TREKPAD TRAIL, CAPE TOWN

# Mud laning!

With Table Mountain and the Atlantic Ocean in the background, the historically significant Ou Trekpad 4x4 trail, situated just 40km from the Cape Town city centre, offers an unusual off-road driving experience. The focus is on family fun rather than 'Oh my goodness!' driving challenges

Text: Danie Botha Photos: Bridgestone SA

**If you are** interested in history and some 4x4 driving challenges, the Ou Trekpad 4x4 trail near Cape Town may be just the place for you.

Based on a farm established in the early 1700s, the trail takes in some sandy tracks and river crossings, with Table Mountain keeping a close eye on proceedings.

The farm was originally called De Kleine Zoute, and was

utilised as a grazing and hunting outpost by the Dutch East Indian Company. The Dutch name says it all: "Aan her overzyde van de Kleine Zoute Rivier" (On the other side of the Little Salt River).

Today the farm is also known by the nickname, Vaatjie. According to the trail's website ([www.outretpad.com](http://www.outretpad.com)) the name hails from the late 1800s when one of the owners, a Mr Schietekat, sank a well at an

overnight camping spot on the transport route that crossed the farm. Schietekat apparently used a keg (*vaatjie* in Afrikaans) to prevent sand from filling the well. He is also said to have had a particular fondness for sweet wine that he bought in Paarl, so in time the transport riders who used the camping site where the *vaatjie* was based swore that the water had a distinct, sweet wine taste.

But let's talk 4x4 driving. Based on typical Western Cape sandveld terrain, the trail ranges in difficulty from 2 to 4. This is no gung-ho trail where 4x4 drivers come to compare the length of their well, recovery straps. Rather, it's aimed at families, and at fun and recreation, with some 4x4 challenges thrown in for good measure.

The trail is 25km long, and mostly sandy with some low



Above, left to right: Although the Ou Trekpad 4x4 trail near Cape Town consists mostly of relatively challenging sand tracks, mud near the Little Salt River offers a test for the more adventurous driver; A "bush bar" is available by arrangement; The lapa... ideal for day visitors who want to escape from the Mother City and have a braai lunch. "Wild camping" is available if prior arrangements are made.

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## THE FACTS

- **NAME:** Ou Trekpad 4x4 Trail.
- **LOCATION:** 40km from Cape Town CBD, off the N7 (leading to Malmesbury)
- **GPS:** S33 degrees 41' 01.88" / E18 degrees 29' 56.65".
- **ACCOMMODATION:** None, but the owners don't mind campers who like to go the wild camp route (by arrangement).
- **FOOD & BEVERAGE:** None on site, but a lapa with braai facilities is available. For bigger groups, catering can be arranged.
- **DIFFICULTY LEVEL:** Easy (grade 2) to difficult (grade 4).
- **VEHICLE REQUIRED:** 4x4 with low-range. Although soft-roaders should be able to handle the sandy conditions, low-range is recommended. You don't need a lifted, modified and heavily accessorised 4x4. A standard 4x4 bakkie or SUV will be able to navigate most of the trail, as it consists largely of sandy tracks that are not hugely challenging. There are optional "holes" that may be of interest to some drivers, but your standard 4x4 may not be too happy negotiating them.
- **ROUTE DURATION:** The route covers 25km, so if you take it easy and make time for the sights and sounds (as one probably should!) it

will take about four hours to complete.

- **PRICE:** R150 per vehicle.
- **UNIQUE TOUCHES:** This sandveld route is a cool family destination over a weekend. It's far enough from Cape Town to feel like a road trip, but the mountain is still in the background when the time comes to find your way home. Although the sand route does not offer major driving challenges there are some areas with optional, tougher 4x4 tracks. This is where the more hardcore 4x4 enthusiasts can "play".
- **GOOD:** A family 4x4 destination with some real history behind it. The trail is based on the old transport route that West Coast farmers used for hundreds of years.
- **NOT SO GOOD:** If you are looking for the ultimate 4x4 driving challenge, this trail is probably not for you. Although there are some tricky sections and optional "play" areas, hardcore 4x4 drivers in tricked-up 4x4s won't be in their element here. And in summer months, the horseflies can be irritating.
- **VERDICT:** A beautiful venue that is also historically significant, offering relatively easy 4x4 driving.
- **CONTACT:** Hettie, tel 079 499-4807/e-mail [hettie@outretpad.com](mailto:hettie@outretpad.com)
- **WEBSITE:** [www.outretpad.com](http://www.outretpad.com)



Above: See-saw you here, see-saw you there... another day, another challenge at Ou Trekpad 4x4 Trail. Bottom: The trail covers 25km, and takes in some historic sandveld tracks. Table Mountain stands guard in the distance, about 40km away.

No quads are allowed, so you will enjoy reasonable peace and quiet in the sandveld while driving this route.

So that's the Ou Trekpad 4x4 trail. It's the ideal starting point for a 4x4 enthusiast who doesn't necessarily want to test his or her skills to the limit. Instead, it offers a historic 4x4 drive down history lane, with plenty of interest for drivers and their families. **LW**

dunes. Several local 4x4 training institutions use the Ou Trekpad as their official training ground. The obstacles are challenging in places but if your nick-name on the 4x4 Community website is "Blackbeard the Ultimate 4x4 Obstacle Conqueror", you probably won't find this trail much of a test of your amazing driving skills.

The venue is just far enough out of Cape Town (40km) to justify a bit of a road trip and a picnic or braai when you take a break. A lapa with braai facilities, an ablution block and a jungle gym are available. There's also a bush pub if you want to bring a few friends or colleagues along, and the venue can arrange a marquis tent or spitbraai (at additional cost, of course).

The trail caters for first-time off-roaders who don't necessarily want to complete an entire 4x4 training course but would like an experienced instructor to assist as needed.

If you are interested in other activities, the organisers can arrange for clay pigeon shooting, archery, paintball and even 4x4 competition-type events.



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# BLASTERS!

In the original Nama tongue, the word “namib” means “vast place”, and vast this ancient desert certainly is. Stretching for about 2000km alongside the Atlantic Ocean, and with dunes that count among the highest in the world, the Namib is a hard, tough and dangerous place. It’s also the venue for the Battle of the Dunes adventure, in which man and machine square up against Mother Nature

**Text:** Danie Botha **Photographs:** Graeme Stonebank

**Frikkie\* was standing** on a massive dune in the Namib desert, peering tentatively over the edge of the 38-degree slip face.

He drives a suped-up Jeep and has a cabinet full of trophies, so he knows his 4x4 business. But on this dune, on this day, it was another story.

“There is no way I’m driving down there,” said Frikkie, the pitch of his voice higher than normal.

“But Frikkie,” said Werner Schaap, Battle of the Dunes organiser and seasoned dune driver. “This is how it’s done in the Namib. Just hook second gear and let the momentum take you down. If you feel the vehicle sliding to the side, just accelerate a bit to pull it straight. It’s really not as bad as it looks.”

“There is no way I’m driving down there,” repeated Frikkie.

“Let me demonstrate,” said Werner, who duly navigated his Jeep Wrangler V6 down the slip face without rolling.

The other 4x4s in the pack soon followed, also without mishap. But

Frikkie was not convinced. So he took out his camping chair, sat himself down next to his Jeep, took out a packet of Marlboros and chain-smoked three “brave” cigarettes, mumbling to himself.

Finally, Frikkie got into his Jeep Wrangler TJ, and handed his fate over to the sand gods. With Werner guiding him over the two-way radio, Frikkie and his TJ made it safely down that slip face.

And so a new sand driving monster was created – a driving monster that always wants to go higher, faster. Frikkie had turned into a “sandoholic”.

That’s the thing about driving a 4x4 in an extreme environment like the Namib – it



Jeep man Corrie Botha clocking some airtime in the Wrangler Unlimited V6 AT. Above: The television crew used an Isuzu KB300 D-Teq 4x4, which they christened Black Mamba. Sadly, it never got to tow a Toyota!





requires a mind shift in driving technique. Once you realise that these slip faces won't kill you and that momentum is your friend when you tackle the climbs, it all gets rather addictive.

Frikkie realised that in the dunes, the old 4x4 adage, "as slow as possible, as fast as necessary" changes to "as fast as possible, as slow as necessary".

The Battle of the Dunes experience is the brainchild of Namibian-born Werner, who owns Weca Off-road Centre in Centurion. He will soon be moving permanently to Swakopmund where he will run an Opposite Lock 4x4 accessory shop – the company's first franchise in Namibia.

Although 4x4 suspensions and accessories are his bread and butter, it's the Namib desert that really rules his heart.

"I've been driving these dunes for a long time and after competing in countless traditional 4x4 competitions, I believe that conquering the dunes is the ultimate 4x4 driving challenge. And that's where the idea for Battle of the Dunes originated," says Werner.

As you would expect, he packs a mean set of dune-conquering wheels: a Jeep Wrangler V6 with a few modifications. So now he can run up and down the dunes almost at will.

"The V6 engine produces 209kW, but a major bonus in the sand is the flat torque curve – 90% of the 347Nm is available from 1800 to 6350r/min, so there's always something on tap. I've also fitted a Tough Dog adjustable suspension that makes a huge difference."

In the sand you don't want a soft



Battle of the Dunes winner Marius Becker's 37-inch Frankencar Jeep – a fine blend of Wrangler Sahara and Rubicon – surprised everyone with its dune-climbing performance.

suspension system. Wheels that bounce lose traction, which in turn results in lost momentum, and getting bogged down.

"I run the Jeep's suspension on its hardest setting, so the wheels are always in contact with the sand," says Werner. "This set-up, combined with the vehicle's relatively low weight, the 33-inch mud terrain tyres that act like scoops, the six-speed manual gearbox, the powerful engine and an override switch for all the traction and stability control systems, ensure that the Jeep runs on the sand like a sidewinder snake."

The other teams in the inaugural Battle of the Dunes found out quickly that it would be nigh impossible to follow Werner's little Jeep over all the dunes.

Corrie Botha's Wrangler Rubicon Unlimited is powered by the same engine as Werner's Jeep, but in the long-wheel base version the V6 motor is partnered by a five-speed automatic



Above: Event organiser Werner Schaap in his shorty Jeep Wrangler Rubicon V6. Right: Jackal meal... an old ostrich egg that fell victim to jackals. Below: Sakkie Coetzee's rally-ready Isuzu VehiCross was the only 4x4 that came close to matching Werner's shorty Jeep on the long, steep climbs.





## 4X4 ADVENTURE BATTLE OF THE DUNES, NAMIBIA



Above: Goose Goosen's supercharged V6 Cruiser did a manful job in hauling a lot of weight up and down the dunes; Top right, left to right: A debeaded tyre is quickly remedied; Plane wreck – a local flew into a big dune in misty conditions. Right: Werner Schaap's 209 kW Wrangler redistributing desert sand at an amazing rate. The little Jeep was virtually unstoppable.



gearbox, and the duo don't make ideal bedfellows in the sand.

Ditto Cobus Pelser and his near-standard Toyota Land Cruiser 79 V6 pick-up. The vehicle tips the scales at about two tons, so the 170kW V6 engine has its work cut out, dragging the tough-as-nails bakkie over the sand.

Also in the Cruiser camp was "Goose" Goosen, driving a supercharged double cab version of the V6 pick-up. This Cruiser certainly won the prize for the best sound track in the dunes, and with a good helping of experience in sand driving, Goose made it up most of the dunes.

Armand Schaap's Wrangler Rubicon is powered by the straight-six 3,8-litre engine, which is about 60kW down on power compared with the newer Jeep V6 motor. However, Armand has plenty of sand-driving experience, too, and he conquered most of the dunes.

One of the stars of this car-versus-sand show was Sakkie Coetzee, driving his amazing little Isuzu Vehicross 3.2 V6. Less than 2000 right-hand drive versions of this rally car

dressed up as a concept car (launched in 1997) were made, and only two units are thought to be in SA.

With a hard rally suspension, a 160 kW V6 engine that also sounds rather fine, a relatively low weight and a driver who knows his stuff, the Isuzu was the only 4x4 that came close to challenging Werner's Jeep.

A surprise package was Marius Becker's Frankencar Jeep – essentially a hybrid of a Wrangler Rubicon Unlimited and a Wrangler Sahara 2.8CRD. It has Rubicon differentials and ratios and is powered by a 147kW/460Nm turbodiesel engine. For many Jeep fans, this would be the ultimate Rubicon.

Marius went a few steps further and added massive 37-inch wheels and mud tyres, fancy suspension and enough other tricks for this Jeep to cost close to R1 million.

The theory of those big wheels in the sand

did not bode well for the Frankencar, but Marius proved the doubters wrong by driving his Jeep up 90% of the dunes.

And this is what makes the Battle of the Dunes such a fascinating and intriguing event. Enthusiasts can bring their daily runners to do battle with some of the biggest, highest dunes in the world.

Just ask Frikkie. He'll tell you how glorious the battle really is. **LW**

*\*Not his real name*

More information: Contact Werner Schaap, tel 083-2261902; e-mail [weca@mwweb.co.za](mailto:weca@mwweb.co.za); [www.battleofthedunes.com](http://www.battleofthedunes.com).

Sundowners.  
On a dune.  
In the Namib.  
Yep, sundowners  
don't get much  
better than this!





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## EXPLORE AFRICA'S WATERFALL ROUTE

Enjoying the beauty and tranquillity of the Ntumbachushi Falls.

# Spectacular SIGHTS

North-west Zambia is a remote area that is not often featured in travel magazines. Getting there requires time and effort, but its beauty makes the journey worthwhile. In issue 128 of *Leisure Wheels*, Explore Africa reported on a trip along the waterfall route, ending at Lake Tanganyika. Here the completion of the route is described

**Text and photography:** Martin Slabbert

**We left the** shores of Lake Tanganyika early on the morning of 7 June 2015. Travelling in that part of the world is slow, mainly because of the potholed roads. We were heading for the Lumangwe Falls, 266km west of Lake Tanganyika and close to the border of the Democratic Republic of Congo. Our average speed was no more than 30km/h, so with normal comfort breaks and "lunch on the go", we were in for around nine hours of travelling.

At the little town of Nsama, we took the road less travelled, and turned west, right at the bottom edge of Lake Mweru Wantipa. The road weaved between huts and villages.

We came across a trader who was transporting dried fish from Lake Tanganyika to Lake Mweru. Apart from seven passengers, his Corolla was heavily laden with bags,

stacked on the boot lid and the roof. He told us that his 160km trip took two days, because he could not get out of first gear!

I took a photograph, and wished him well on his journey.

We reached Lumangwe Falls around 16h00. What an awesome sight! The falls were definitely worth the long drive. The waterfall is 30m high and more than 100m wide, nourishing a small rain forest downstream.

The site is on the Kalungwishi River, 84km west of the town of Mporokoso. Apart from the beauty of the falls, Lumangwe offers abundant flora and fauna, some endemic to this part of Zambia. Entrance to the observation area costs \$15 per person and \$5 per vehicle. There are neat ablution facilities, and firewood is provided by the friendly staff.



There are actually three waterfalls on the Kalungwishi River in this area – the Lumangwe, Kabwelume and Chimpempe falls. It is the only area in Zambia boasting three waterfalls in a 5km stretch of river.

We left Lumangwe next morning for a visit to the Kabwelume Falls, which were just as impressive as Lumangwe falls, with water cascading about 50m onto the rocks below.

Then it was a short drive to the Ntumbachushi Falls, which are 20km west of the town of Kawambwa. This is the smallest of the three waterfalls, but by no means less impressive than the others. It has two cataracts, with a total height of around 40m.

A walkway next to the falls took us upstream to one of the most diversified places in Zambia, with endless rapids and abundant birdlife – truly a place of “food for the soul”.

The camping area, though, was disappointing. There was only one flushing toilet – at the main office – but the scenery and general experience made up in some way for the poor facilities.

Next port of call was the town of Mansa. We found a Shoprite store where we replenished



our supplies, and filled up with fuel.

We now headed south to Kasanka National Park, where we stayed for two nights. On the way, we stopped at Samfya for a lunch break – on the “beach” of Lake Bangweulu.

The lake is as impressive as the others in the region, with the main inflow coming from the south via the Luapula River and adjacent Bangweulu flood plains.

We crossed a 2,5km bridge over the floodplains to reach the Pontoon camps in the late afternoon. Apart from the usual wildlife, such as puku, impala and waterbuck, we saw the rare sitatunga (*Tregelaphus spekii*) in the wetlands alongside the camp site.

We visited one of the biggest trees in Zambia, about 9km away. The giant mofwe tree is 65m high and roughly 400 years old – truly an awesome sight.

Kasanka is well known for its annual fruit bat migration, which takes place every year from late October to early December. Around 10 million bats migrate from Caboen and the Congo during this time, to feed on the masuki fruit.

It was now almost time to head for home. We slept at Eureka Farms, about 10km south of Lusaka, before departing for Livingstone to visit the Victoria Falls – the last of the waterfalls on our journey, but by far the most spectacular. It will always be one of the great natural wonders of the world.

We crossed the Zambezi River on the Kazungula Ferry, and later said our goodbyes at Elephant Sands, 50km north of Nata in Botswana. We encountered 29 elephants at the waterhole, and it was as if they wanted to give the group a memorable send-off – a great ending to a perfect trip! **LW**



### MORE INFORMATION

Explore Africa will offer the same safari next year, and is currently accepting bookings for the trip. For more information, send an e-mail to Avril Muller at [avril@ramsaymedia.co.za](mailto:avril@ramsaymedia.co.za).



Top: The Kabwelume Falls on the Kalungwishi River. Centre: Studying a map of our route through Zambia. Above: The majestic 100m-wide Lumangwe Falls is an awesome sight.





# Taste adventure



Leisure Wheels 4x4 Safaris will offer shorter safaris to its readers in 2015. We are busy developing some interesting itineraries on the Wild Coast, the mountains in the Eastern Cape, the West Coast and other exiting destinations within South Africa.

## NAMIBIA

### ■ Lüderitz to Walvis Bay

2016: 17 – 23 Aug, 19 – 25 Sep

Places visited on the way include Silvia Hill, Meob Bay, Conception Bay and Sandwich Bay. Desert wildlife, spectacular scenery, untouched beaches, abandoned mining settlements, miles of sand driving and shipwrecks are some of the attractions along the way.

►► R8 250pp

### ■ Faces of the Namib – Sand Sea

2016: 12 – 17 June, 11 – 16 Sep, 13 – 18 Nov

Exploring the central Namib – discover an untamed wilderness with beauty as unique and diverse as only the Namib can offer.

►► R8 500 pp

## PONDOLAND

### ■ Wildcoast 2016: 19-26 March, 3-10 September

Pondoland, on the Transkei Wild Coast, is one of the destinations that so many people would like to visit, but know so little about, and do not want to go there on their own. Pondoland, is a land of wild cattle and wilder beauty, of waterfalls plunging directly into the Indian Ocean, of colonies of vultures nesting above undisturbed forest gorges, and a beautiful but rugged coastline which boasts some of the most spectacular scenery in Southern Africa.

►► R 5 400 pp (subject to change)



## ZAMBIA

### ■ Tanganyika Waterfall Route

2016: 10 June – 2 July

We believe in innovation and always want to offer something new and exciting, and Zambia also never fails to surprise. This safari takes you to the most spectacular waterfalls Zambia can offer. From the impressive Lumangwe falls to the smaller, but equally beautiful Chisimba – and Mutumuna falls, the route also includes the world's longest freshwater, the second largest and second deepest lake, Lake Tanganyika.

►► R14 200 pp



## ZAMBIA

### ■ Zambia with Zest 2016: 29 August – 20 September

Zambia is one of the undiscovered gems of Africa and this safari will take you to its hidden places. They include South Luangwa, Luambe, North Luangwa, Kapishya Hot Springs, and the North and South of Kafue. And, of course, there is also a visit to a world-famous natural wonder – the Victoria Falls.

►► R19 800 pp (subject to change).

## AFRICA COMBO

### ■ Big Five to Big Blue 2016: 18 April – 5 May

The diversity of this safari through five African countries is special. The itinerary takes in the world-renowned Big Five game reserves, Chobe in Botswana and South Luangwa in Zambia. You will also visit the breathtaking Lake Malawi, the Cahora Bassa Dam and the Eastern Highlands of Zimbabwe.

►► R11 200 pp (subject to change).

►► For more information on any of these tours or to book your trip, contact Avril Muller well in advance on 021 530 3186 or [avril@ramsaymedia.co.za](mailto:avril@ramsaymedia.co.za)



## ZIMBABWE

### ■ Cross-country expedition

**2016: 20 May- 2 June**

This safari allows you to experience all facets of Zimbabwe – from camping on the banks of the Zambezi to the luxury chalets at Troutbeck Inn in the Eastern Highlands. The itinerary includes the Matopos, Hwange National Park, a ferry crossing on Lake Kariba, the Mana Pools, Harare, Nyanga National Park in the Eastern Highlands and the Great Zimbabwe Ruins.

►►R16 900 pp (subject to change).

## REPUBLIC OF CONGO

**2016: August/September. (3 weeks – final dates to be confirmed).**

Visiting the modern day 'Dorsland Trekkers' at Dolisie in the Republic of Congo. This promises to be an unforgettable adventure via Angola, DRC (just crossing the western part), towards Cabinda and exploring the Republic of Congo? There are various exciting destinations with very little organised 'self-drive tourism'. Go in search of the western mountain Gorillas.

►►Price on application.

## ANGOLA

**2016: 27 Jun – 10 Jul**

Angola is a giant jigsaw puzzle of different climates, landscapes and colours. Tainted by its colonial past, Angola offers huge mountains, vast open plains, wide white beaches and rich tropical rainforests. Angola, has it all!

►►R12 000pp. Price based on min. of 16 people – dinners only.

## ZAMBIA

### ■ Liuwa Plains

**2016: 7 – 19 November**

This safari is a combination of the wildebeest migration in Liuwa Plains and the migration of the "Flying Foxes" or straw coloured fruit bats in Kasanka National Park. Few people have ventured into the Liuwa Plain due to its relative inaccessibility. However the prolific birdlife, the wildebeest migration and the story of Lady Liuwa, the "last lioness", makes it one of Africa's last true wildernesses and a huge attraction to the bush fundi. During this time of year five million straw-coloured fruit bats also take up residence in one hectare of Kasanka National Park's Mushitu swamp forest. This is a spectacle not to be missed and one of Africa's greatest wildlife spectacles, if not the world's.

►►R11 100 pp (subject to change)



## TANZANIA

### ■ Wildebeest Migration

**2016: 18 July – 21 August**

This safari offers a once-in-a-lifetime experience – the beginning of the annual wildebeest migration in the Serengeti, also called the "Birth of Life". There is also a visit to Lake Malawi and the Ngorongoro Crater. The journey leads us through Mozambique, Malawi, Tanzania, Zambia and Botswana.

►►7 200 pp (Guide fee only and subject to change)



## EASTERN CAPE HIGHLANDS

### ■ The Wild Side of the Drakensberg

**2016: 27 April – 2 May, 15 – 20 Oct**

The Eastern Cape Highlands, also known as "The Wild Side of the Drakensberg" is growing in popularity as a safe and un-commercialised mountain destination with spectacular scenery and challenging gravel Mountain Passes. The route includes Naudes Nek with a summit of over 2,920m above sea level, the Village of Rhodes and up with Carlislehoek Pass to Tiffindell Ski Resort. We will pass the highest point in the Cape (3,001m above sea level) known by local residents as BenMac named after the peak Ben McDhui in Scotland. The scenery is nothing short of spectacular. Lundeane's Nek connecting this part of the Eastern Cape to the Lesotho border at Telebridge. The safari will be over 5 days and all the accommodation will be in the form of guesthouses and B&B's.

►►R5 500 pp (Subject to change)



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# Guns and coffee, off-road style

Sudan doesn't have a shiny reputation as a tourist destination, and is largely avoided by travellers. It has the image among westerners as a place of desert sands, war, fundamentalists and even genocide. Andrea Kaucka and Rene Bauer have a different story to tell.

**Text and photography:** Andrea Kaucka and Rene Bauer





**Travelling from Europe** to Sudan, you have to go through Egypt and then load your car onto a ferry, though “rusty tub” would be a more fitting description. This is necessary to cross the Nasser Lake from Assuan to Wadi Halfa, because roads between the two countries are not open to the public.

The experience is rather disconcerting because you have to go on a “passenger ferry” while your vehicle is assigned to a “car barge”. We could only hope and pray that we would be reunited with our trusty Nissan Patrol on the other side of the lake, and not at its bottom!

In this part of the world they don’t appear to know about ratchets and proper tie-downs. The cars were secured by little more than a flimsy piece of string, the car’s handbrake, first gear and a lot of praying.

We left Assuan a day later than the Nissan. Our planned departure was scheduled for 9am, but we ended up leaving at 5pm because the ferry was overloaded with food, tins, fridges, bathtubs and people. As we hadn’t booked a cabin in a bid to save money, we were at the mercy of the burning sun for much of the time. The journey took about 20 hours, and when we arrived in Wadi Halfa we got our first shock – the car barge was nowhere to be seen.

Everyone was keen to have a look under the bonnet to see what powered the Patrol. The friendly people of Sudan were more than happy to pose for pictures.



Sudan is home to pyramids marking kingdoms of the Nile valley.  
Photo by Vassi Koutsafitis  
<http://arclight-pictures.com>  
Simoon Travel

To our relief, we found that the barge had experienced engine trouble in the middle of the lake and had been delayed. This meant we had the opportunity to stay over in one of the locandas (hotels) in Wadi Halfa. Mind you, the name “hotel” was an absolute overstatement. The term “cell” would be a more accurate.

It was several days before our Nissan arrived, and it took all day to unload it after we denied the captain a tip for his efforts.

There were three cars on the barge – a Mitsubishi L300, a newer Patrol 3.0 and our truck, a 1992 Nissan Patrol SWB. As soon as we had checked the vehicles, we hit the dust road for Khartoum. The first night in the desert under a thousand stars was great compensation for the stress of the previous few days.

### Lost in Nubian villages

We were lucky to take this road along the Nile before it was tarred. There was gravel, deep sand and nothing but desert around us. Sometimes the Nile would be close by, and sometimes a few kilometres away.

The first thing we noticed when we drove through a Sudanese village was that it was clean and tidy. The villages consist mostly of mud houses, nicely decorated with a colourful entrance gate, with palm trees and swept yards. It felt like travelling back in time.

Whenever we stopped at a shop for a cold drink we were greeted with respect and friendliness. Often the people invited us for a tea or a *jebenah*, which is a Sudanese coffee with cardamom.

Most of the men wanted to check out our Nissan, so we would open the bonnet to let them have a look at the straight six. They would smile, and give the thumbs up before walking off, their *gallabiyas* waving in the wind.

As there are no camping grounds in this part of the world, we always camped in the desert. There are lots of beautiful places to spend the



## ADVENTURE IN SUDAN THROUGH THE WILD KORDOFAN



The sights, tastes and sounds of Sudan in a random collection of photographs taken during the adventure.



night, either behind a sand dune or at the foot of a rocky outcrop.

During the day we collected what little firewood we could find and put it on our roof rack for the evening. Needless to say, we absolutely loved those nights in the Sahara with nothing but sand and peace around us, and the Milky Way overhead.

One of the bigger towns on our way to Khartoum was Dongola, but we stopped there only to replenish our water supply and buy bread and vegetables from the market. To the locals, we were something of an attraction, as they aren't used to visitors. For us, it was quite an experience.

We left Dongola for a holy mountain that was said to be the site of an ancient civilisation.

### Land of the black pharaohs

The mountain soon filled the horizon. Legend has it that this was the residence of the God of the Air, Amun, or Jebel Barkal. In the foothills were the remains of a massive temple and behind it, an old graveyard of nine pyramids.

A few kilometres farther down the road we came to the old tombs of El Kuru. Its pyramids were long gone, but one can still visit the underground tomb of King Tantamani.

The door was locked, and we tried to find a guard with a key. Eventually an old man came shuffling towards us with a lamp and the keys. Inside the tomb, we were amazed by the old paintings, similar to the ones in Egypt.

Once again, we made camp in the desert and reminisced about the events of the day.

In the morning we packed up early before the heat kicked in, and continued towards Meroe, one of the largest pyramid fields in Sudan. At one time there were more than 200, but many have been claimed by the desert winds.

There are still about 40 to be seen. They may not be as impressive and big as those in Egypt, but to us they held much more fascination, because there were no tourists here. We felt like explorers, finding these ancient places. There is just a sea of sand and a wind that has been blowing for thousands of years – blue sky and these ancient pyramids. Absolutely magnificent!

After spending two hours walking among the pyramids, we took a deep sand track through the Bayuda desert and headed for two other mysterious places in the middle of nowhere – the temples of Musawwarat and Naga. These ancient monuments once belonged to a mighty kingdom, which succeeded the Egyptian dynasties and the Kingdom of Kush.



Tarred roads were rare, but Andrea and Rene preferred the sand, anyway. Left: An example of the hieroglyphs, found in underground caves called *El Kurru*.



Right: Rene sits down for a rest in front of an old entrance gate.



Once a colony of the Egyptian pharaohs, the kingdom gained independence when the Egyptian rulers weakened, in about 2000 BC. The architectural style, reliefs, religion and lifestyle were very similar to those in Egypt, and this is reflected in the temples, pyramids, engravings and paintings.

After a day of sightseeing, the sun set while we were still driving. In Africa it's a bad idea to travel at night, not only because of possible bandits but also because of animals and children. There were a few occasions when we were startled by the sudden appearance of a cow or camel right in front of us.

There is also the problem of the lack of electricity in the rural areas, so there is no warning of lights when you approach a village. When we stopped that night, we thought we

were on a lonely plain. Only in the morning did we find that we had slept right in the middle of a little village! Children had gathered around us and watched us unwind. Slightly embarrassed, we had a quick breakfast and hit the road. And this time there was no sand or gravel track, but lovely, new tar.

The new road cut through an ocean of sand, which was sometimes lined by low shrubs, occasionally with a few goats or camels chewing on the dry branches. We went through a light sandstorm, but other than that there was nothing, and we had trouble keeping our eyes open.

Finally, after about 400km, the settlements were getting bigger, and more and more houses and buildings were popping out of the sand, mostly mud buildings in a typical Arab style.



Sudan has more pyramids than Egypt. The most famous are the Meroe Pyramids.



## ADVENTURE IN SUDAN THROUGH THE WILD KORDOFAN

Ancient remains can be found everywhere in Sudan, like here, on the way to Suakin adjacent the Red Sea.

### Khartoum, guns and monkeys

And so to fabled Khartoum, capital city of Sudan. The traffic got heavier and soon we were in the colourful chaos that is typical of a capital city.

We were flagged down by some Sudanese guys in a 4x4, and that's how we met Abdel Salam, Taha, Hassan and Mohammed – a bunch of off-road fanatics. They confessed later that they often “hunt down” foreign

overlanders coming through Khartoum.

Their hospitality was unbelievable. and we ended up staying with Taha for more than a week.

In Khartoum we had to apply for travel permits to enter the south-western regions of the country. There are many roadblocks in Sudan and the officials always want to see your passports and travel permits.

We wanted permits for Darfur, the Red

Sea and the Nuba Mountains. The officer immediately crossed out Darfur, as this was a “no go” area for tourists.

Our new friends invited us on a trip to a mango plantation. This proved to be perfect timing as it was 23rd January, Rene's 30th birthday.

In the beginning everything went well. On the way we had a lovely lunch of grilled Nile perch and shata – a very hot chilli sauce. On resuming the journey, we turned onto a muddy track and drove between the villages.

There was a little dam we had to cross, and unfortunately Rene stalled the truck and nearly put it on its side. We were stuck in a muddy dam in Sudan! The left front wheel was about half a metre in the air. Luckily, our hefty Sudanese friends hung on to the side of the truck to get the wheel back down, and we got out.

As usually happens in the wilds of Africa, a big crowd gathered for the spectacle. It must have been like TV – some white guys, a big car and lots of action!

The mud track soon became sand and at some points was not much more than a

metre wide. We had to squeeze our car through the bushes. We looked at each other and both had the same thought. What if these people kidnapped us? What if they stopped their cars, and pulled out guns? Would it be a case of, “That's it for our adventure in Africa?”

Well, the cars in front of us did stop. Abdelsalam got out, opened his boot ... and



Left: On the back roads, one has to rely on the friendly inhabitants if something goes wrong. Below left: Rene sets up camp for the night. Below: The remains of what used to be a tarred road.







Palm gardens and plantations are a typical feature of the river Nile.

pulled out guns. We looked at him with big eyes, and he just grinned and told us we were going to shoot monkeys. Phew! What a relief!

### Into the unknown

After an eventful day, our friends returned to Khartoum and we continued towards the province of Kordofan and the Nuba Mountains. For us, this felt like a road into the absolute unknown. We had heard of the Nuba, but one of our major concerns was the civil war that had been raging there for 22 years.

We spent the first night in El Obeid, which is halfway to the mountains. Actually, we were sent there to say hello to Taha's sister, but "hello" in Sudan means having dinner, staying the night, having breakfast and leaving around lunchtime the next day!

From El Obeid it was another 300km to Kadugli, South Kordofan's capital. The first 80km was bad asphalt and the rest a washed out track, destroyed by the rainy season and heavy trucks.

After a tough, bone shaking journey, we arrived in Kadugli at sunset and made camp outside town in a lovely setting among acacia trees. We were a bit nervous. There were no tourists here, a war was said to be raging and we didn't know how people would react when they came across us. Curiosity was stronger than fear, though, and the Nuba mountains are home to some very interesting tribes.

This little mountain range is up to 900m high, with villages nestled in the rolling hills. But instead of typical Arab-style houses, there were mainly rondavels and mud huts. It was Africa going sub-Saharan!

Our first contact with people from Kadugli was cautious. The locals were timid and didn't understand what a white person would want there. When they saw our overland truck they just shook their heads in disbelief at these

"tourists".

Through a friend of Taha, we were directed to the local Sudanese People's Liberation Movement office to meet Jabir, a young information officer who volunteered to be our guide. Wherever we went in our Nissan, people stopped and looked on in awe.

Kadugli's main road is tarred, but the rest is dust and gravel with deep potholes. There were lots of people about, many of them walking into town from the surrounding villages.

We met a group of schoolchildren, in neat uniforms. They came to greet and touch us because, for them, white skin is something unusual. Some smaller children even started crying when they saw us.

Later that day we paid a visit to the Miri Miri dam, where Rene and Jabir enjoyed a cooling swim. We were told there was no bilharzia. Although we went to Sudan in winter, it still got close to 40°C in January. Even at night the temperature never dipped below 25°C.

An ice-cold beer would really have been appreciated, but there's no such thing in Sudan, a strict Muslim country, unless one sneaks into an unofficial bar in the evening and tries marisa or arragi – local beers made from sorghum and a spirit made from dates. We spent the evenings sitting in a dark alley –



Above: Rene didn't think he would celebrate his 30th birthday with a gang of Sudanese off-road nuts shooting at the Nile!  
Below: Enjoying some of the local delicacies.



there is no power supply – sipping hot coffee.

Our days of exploring Sudan unfortunately came to an end because our visas were expiring. And so we made our way back towards Kosti and on to the Ethiopian border.

On the Sudanese side we were invited for coffee one last time while an official took care of our passports. With heavy hearts, we left Africa's most friendly and hospitable country. **LW**





VOETSPORE DIARY

With Johan  
Badenhorst

THE BIG SWITCH

# From a star to a legend



Johan Badenhorst and the *Voetspore* team have swapped their convoy of Volkswagen Amaroks for something a little more legendary, in the hopes of conquering Madagascar

**In September we** left on the tenth Voetspore adventure – *Voetspore in Madagascar*. This was the first time we had left the continent, even though the island is technically part of Africa. We went offshore and we did it in brand-new vehicles. Three Toyota Land Cruisers were shipped from Durban to the port of Tamatave on the eastern coast of Madagascar.

But why the switch? Were we not happy with the Amaroks?

It is a difficult thing to explain.

The Volkswagens were good. We did three major journeys in them. We only had one major breakdown. All in all, we can say that these “soft” 4x4s surprised us. We were especially impressed by the eight-speed automatic gearbox.

The 2,0-litre engine is adequate. But, to a certain extent, one gets tired of the question of how well the Amaroks – and any other vehicle for that matter – compare with a Cruiser. The Toyota Land

Cruiser is undoubtedly the king of Africa. That is why we decided that, instead of driving a vehicle that may or may not compare with the Cruiser, why not drive the real thing? When Calvyn Hamman, senior vice president of Toyota SA, offered to provide Cruisers for the next three Voetspore expeditions, I was more than happy to accept.

At the Voetspore Shop and Fitment Centre in Woodlands Boulevard, Pretoria, we received the two double-cabs and

one single-cab, ready for our Madagascar expedition. It is true that a Land Cruiser 70 series is a very basic vehicle, but these basics are what make the Cruiser so reliable.

It is also, by far, the best vehicle to fit exactly to your specifications. The team in the workshop, led by Francois Marais, had a fantastic time getting the Cruisers ready. I don't think I have ever seen Francois, Louis, Danie, Herman, Trevor, Leighton and Charles more proud of finalising a job.



Route National 5, which runs along the east coast of Madagascar, is one of the most challenging national roads in the world. This is ideal terrain for a Cruiser.



Right: Johan Badenhorst with Francois Marais and cameraman William Warren on their expedition through Madagascar. Below: There are seven ferry crossings on the road from Tamatave to Mananara, some more adventurous than others.



We approached all our old partners – the ones we have come to trust over the years. Deon Venter of 4x4 Megaworld was once again more than keen to provide us with Old Man Emu suspensions, ARB bull bars and fridges and T Max winches. Jeremy Bergh of Alucab provided us with canopies, as well as roof-top tents and awnings.

Then there were the other regular suppliers such as Frontrunner, Cadac, LK's, Lumeno, Polly Craft, the dual battery management system from Ctek, seat covers from Escape Gear, clothing from Drimac, various Tentco products, Gerber, Maglite, Helle and Chef'ease. But there were also a few new friends. Uys van Rooyen gave us serious and proper rock sliders, Northern Off-road fitted the two double cabs with recently developed extra fuel tanks and we also had new rubber with Dick Cepek rims and Mickey Thompson tyres.

This time we were better prepared than ever before.

The vehicles looked good. Driving them down to Durban, we drew more attention than we would have received in a convoy of Lamborghinis. We were the envy of many a guy. This is what a safari vehicle should look like. But there is more to it than appearances. This is also what a safari vehicle should drive like.

We were spoiled with

automatic gearboxes and vehicles without low range. Now, suddenly, we had to "drive" again, and nothing felt better.


The V8 under the hood is a serious piece of machinery. It purrs like a cat, and we seldom had to change down from fifth to fourth, all the way to the coast.

There is no doubt that the Land Cruiser is the safari king of the continent. This is a reputation based on experience, not acquired through some advertising campaign. In Africa, it is not only the safari enthusiasts who drive these brutes, but also the shopkeepers, the government officials and the ambulance men.

In certain parts of Africa and the Middle East, wars are waged in Land Cruisers. The combatants have long since realised that a Cruiser is even more reliable than a military machine.

Madagascar would challenge our vehicles, and ourselves. Distances are not that great, but the road conditions are horrendous. We

were very happy that we were in a position to tackle our challenges with absolute confidence, knowing that if we got to an obstacle that looked impossible to overcome, the Cruiser would manage it, if any vehicle could.

As the Toyota guys say: "It's a Cruiser thing. You won't understand..." 



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## TYRE TESTING

# Ultimate trial in the Transkei

General Tire recently took a fleet of Jeeps to the Transkei to test the durability of its new Grabber A/T. Francois Rossouw tagged along to see how they performed

**The Transkei** is a very beautiful place, but if you want to go off the beaten track, you really have to know where you go. It's mainly community land with various people having jurisdiction over it. This is where their cattle graze and where they grow their food. We respect their privacy and use a guide who knows where not to go.

The main tar road, the N2, just takes you from east to west quite far inland, but if you drive to the holiday hotels on the coast, you will find there are many tar roads closer to the sea, with bad gravel roads connecting them to the main route. This is mainly because the planned coastal highway is still on the drawing board. Once the new highway is built, it will join up

with the tar roads that are already there. This is to ensure that no "unnecessary" roads are built.

If it rains in the Transkei, the dirt roads become a nightmare, especially where new roads are under construction. The slippery mud is like a soapy sludge.

General Tire wanted to test their latest Grabber A/T all terrain tyres to the limit. They wanted to see if they could handle the bad roads and if the sidewalls could withstand the sharp rocks and sticks of the river crossings.

From East London we took the road to Kei Mouth and on the tar we tested the highway handling of the tyres at high speed.

Off the highway, after crossing the Kei River by ferry, the road disappeared after a few kilometres.

This was where the fun started. The small trail took us to a river crossing without any bridge. It was clear that this road had not seen any traffic for a long time. It was overgrown and washed away, with the rocks in the crossing exposed. But the guide said that it was the way, and we followed!

We had seven Jeep Wrangler Rubicons with front and rear diff locks. They were supposed to go "anywhere", but this was now getting extreme. The tyres were deflated to 1.6 Bar, diff locks were engaged and we put on our bravest faces.

The cars were bouncing and spinning with mud flying everywhere, but in the end we all made it. There was no road on the other side, but the guide

knew where it used to be and we tackled the slippery muddy gradients like daredevils.

Thanks to the tread pattern of the tyres, the mud was forced out and the grooves kept clear, which meant they could keep biting into the turf-like ground. We crossed another few rivers where the rocks were so sharp and exposed that the tyres went through some serious punishment, but still we did not get a single puncture.

We stayed at Mazeppa Bay for one night. This was the day it started raining. Next day, we followed a road under construction. The ground was so sticky that the wheels became bigger and bigger. The soapy, slippery mud made it almost impossible to steer. We just aimed, slipped and slid and sometimes turned right around, but when it became extremely slippery you just put your foot down so that the tyres could spin fast. The mud was flung away by the centrifugal force and the tyres regained some sort of grip.

After three days of mud, sweat and gears, we finally reached the tar road again after the Kei Mouth ferry. Back on tar we could not believe that the vehicles drove so smoothly. After the punishment they had taken, sometimes even at low pressure, you would expect the tyres' balance to be disturbed, but no, the ride was as smooth as the day we started.

The blokes at General Tire clearly had a lot of confidence in their new Grabber A/T and they were not let down. In the process we all gained new respect for the product. **LW**



The General Grabber A/T tyres on the Jeep Wrangler test vehicles fared exceptionally well in all terrain, even when the pressure was deflated to just 1,6 bar.





# Off-road pain

Going off-road is great fun, but don't think your vehicle will always come back unscathed. Body damage is the least you can expect, says Jake Venter



**Old-timers will know** that you cannot have much fun in a 4x4 until it has suffered some pain.

When it is new, you are in a mental state when every scratch is a major upheaval in your life. But once your vehicle has been damaged and fixed, you will be more prepared for whatever is going to happen next, and things will happen!

The likelihood of expensive damage depends to a large extent on the kind of off-road vehicle you've bought. There is a big difference in off-road coping ability between what I see as the four main classes of off-road vehicles:

The best is exemplified by the very expensive workhorse 4x4s that are designed to spend most of their time off the road. These vehicles usually have three diff locks and special fully-floating final drive units. These hubs can be recognised by a (usually) six-bolted plate in the centre of the hub.

This is actually the end of the drive shaft, and if you remove the plate you can pull the shaft out without removing the wheel or even jacking up the vehicle. This layout is universally used on trucks, and is a far stronger construction than the usual passenger car axle. These vehicles should cope with any amount of abuse provided they are serviced regularly.

Luxury 4x4s are often very capable, but they are too complicated and heavy to be taken seriously off-road. Fittings like air suspension and dual-mass

clutches seem less capable of taking abuse.

Off-road vehicles based on one-ton bakkies are very popular and they are usually very



capable. The fact that they are based on commercial vehicles tends to make them very robust.

Soft-roaders, usually based on front wheel drive family cars, are seldom tough enough or capable enough to be taken seriously. Some of them actually have a note in the owner's manual to warn drivers that they are not designed to go off-road.

## Engine

Most modern engines are tough enough to cope with the sort of punishment that they will get when going slowly, sometimes at high revs, on difficult terrain on a hot day. This kind of motoring puts extra emphasis on cooling provided mostly by the radiator fan, and in extreme conditions an engine may overheat.

Engines being operated in dusty conditions need fresh, clean oil and petrol filters more often. Air filters should get special attention, especially if you have negotiated some streams.

Both sand and water can cause an air filter to close up, resulting in a reduced air supply to the engine.

In a petrol engine, this may cause an over-rich air/fuel mixture that will show up in excessive fuel consumption and a loss of performance. In a diesel engine, dirty filters will cause overheating because the engine always needs an oversupply of fresh air. If this supply is reduced, black smoke and

a wrecked turbo are bound to follow.

## Transmission

Oddly enough, manual transmission vehicles tend to suffer more than automatics because most drivers slip the clutch too much when starting off or negotiating a slow-speed section. This causes excessive heat and wear.

If you often go into water, both the gearbox and the final drive unit will have to be fitted with proper breathers that won't allow water into these casings. Some of the top 4x4s are equipped with such breathers.

## Alignment

Off-road driving often plays havoc with wheel alignment, but it's not practical to have your alignment checked after every off-road adventure. The best you can do is inspect your tyres frequently, and get an expert's opinion if you see any unusual wear patterns.

## Tyres

The tyres must be suited to whatever kind of motoring you do most. Off-road tyres are available in off-road/on-road driving percentages that vary from 40/60, 50/50, 60/40 and 70/30 to 80/20. This wide range of choices makes it easy to choose the best tyres for your kind of motoring, but it also means that you will often come across sections where your choice of tyre will be unsuitable.

## Suspension

The suspension will take a hammering, and it will be worth your while to examine the suspension and shock absorbers from time to time for any signs of damage. Experience has shown that beam axles suspended on coils or leaf springs tend to be more robust than independent suspension. In the latter case, some brands use coil springs while others employ torsion bars. There's very little to choose between the two layouts.

## Underbody

The underbody should also be examined regularly for signs of damage to brackets, pipes, mountings, steering gear and anti-roll bars. On a dedicated 4x4, some parts will be protected by suitable shields, but on the less expensive vehicles this will not be the case. Make a particular note of the catalytic converter's position and shield (where fitted) because it runs hot enough to set fire to dry grass and leaves. Look in your owner's manual to see if there is a warning about where you should not park your vehicle. **LW**





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## SAFETY TALK

# Tell yourself what's happening

It may seem strange, but according to Ashref Ismail, you can become a safer driver by giving yourself a running commentary along the way

**Crashes occur** for a variety of reasons, but mostly because there was a lack of concentration by the driver, resulting in insufficient space and time to prevent an accident.

People tend to be overwhelmed by distractions and now, with the increasing (and illegal) use of mobile phones by drivers, the problem is getting worse. Add the huge numbers of poorly trained drivers, fraudulently obtained licences, alcohol abuse, fatigue, errant pedestrians, stray animals, potholes and inadequate law enforcement, and you have a frightening recipe for disaster, resulting in the average fatality rate in SA of 40 a day.

Let me introduce you to an effective system that will bring a huge improvement in your observation skills, thereby ensuring your safety. It's called the Commentary Driving System and is successfully used by police forces around the world, as well as by rally competitors.

As the name implies, you give yourself a running commentary

about everything you see in front of your car, behind you (from your mirrors) and on the sides. The idea is that you talk out loud to yourself. Sorry passengers, you are just going to have to bear with the driver, or even help by becoming the proverbial back seat driver.

Since it is called a system, you need to be systematic about the way you observe and prioritise the hazards that you encounter. So begin by doing a quick exterior and interior pre-trip inspection. Then take a look at yourself: describe your mental and physical condition. Are you tired, angry, depressed or worried? Give yourself a pep talk if this seems appropriate.

Being aware of your car's condition will help you adjust your speed accordingly, and be more cautious if, for instance, the tyres are a bit worn or the brakes need attention.

The same applies to your own condition. You need to drive more carefully if you are not in the best frame of mind.

As you set off, quietly describe

the weather and the road surface. Pay careful attention to both moving and stationary hazards. Check in your rear view mirror every eight to ten seconds, and use your exterior mirrors when making lane changes, all the while giving yourself a commentary on potential hazards such as vehicles, cyclists, pedestrians and animals, whether they are in front of you, behind you or at the side of the road.

When describing stationary hazards, start with the road signs, especially warning signs. If you have passed a warning sign without noticing it, you've failed!

Remember to search far ahead. That will give you time to identify potential hazards, predict what a vehicle or cyclist may do and how they will affect your safety. If necessary, decide on your course of action (change speed, change direction or simply hoot) and once you have decided, execute the manoeuvre swiftly.

From "searching" to "execution" should not take longer than a few seconds.

Don't worry if you see more

than you can talk about. The brain has the power to register every observation, even if your mouth hasn't been able to keep up with your eyes! The important thing is that the brain will process the information and allow you to make the necessary adjustments as you are bombarded with images, especially in an urban environment.

In practice then, it would go something like this: While you drive down the street in your suburb, your eyes are constantly searching the road for hazards. You might spot a ball bouncing into your path. Instinct tells you there could be a child running after the ball. You decide on the correct action to take – slowing down or changing direction – and promptly execute the manoeuvre.

This folks, in Advanced Defensive Driving Skills parlance, is the "SIPDE System" (search, identify, predict, decide and execute). Coupled with the commentary driving system, it is a highly effective way of improving your alertness, safety and even your driving pleasure. **LW**

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**CAMPSITE REVIEW**  
with Gary Swemmer  
**DOORNKRAAL,**  
**ITHALA GAME**  
**RESERVE**

# Great scenery and trails

This month Gary Swemmer travelled all the way to Kwazulu-Natal to visit the tranquil Doornkraal campsite in the Ithala Game Reserve

**We arrived at** Ithala Game Reserve with little knowledge of this northern Kwazulu-Natal park. We had only the assumption that the reserve was small, and not very well known. We arrived there after 3pm, and were told at reception that we needed to be in our campsite by 5pm, as no vehicles were allowed to drive in the reserve after that time.

There were two possible routes – a round-about gravel road, or a more direct 4x4 track. Needless to say, we chose the latter... and then got lost.

After trekking along a magnificently scenic 4x4 route for roughly two hours, we eventually popped out onto a gravel road. However, the beacon in front of us indicated that we were now on the other side of the reserve, far from where we wanted to be.

After asking for directions from one of the park's rangers – a very serious-looking guy with an R1 rifle and a look that suggested we were rhino poachers – we finally took the round-about route to our camp. Along the way, we learned an important fact about Ithala – it was not nearly as small as we thought!

Covering roughly 30 000ha, Ithala boasts a surprisingly diverse landscape, thanks to the Pongola, Bivane and Thalu rivers. All three run through the park and have a good flow of water. The area is also quite mountainous, adding to the terrain's captivatingly complex flora and fauna.

The park features more than 23 mammal species, including white and black rhino, kudu, tsessebe, red hartebeest, eland, giraffe, leopard, cheetah, brown hyena, and (more recently) elephant.

The Doornkraal campsite is located in the park's western half, not far from the rangers' station. The campsite itself is fairly large, with just enough space to house a few off-road trailers or caravans. And, if you stick to the main gravel roads, you can get there in a normal car – no 4x4 required.

Although the site has rustic ablutions (open-air shower and toilets), the camp is well equipped. It has running water (supposedly drinkable), gas-powered showers, braai facilities and a communal kitchen area shaded with thatch.

Best of all, there's a 17km 4x4 trail that starts



Above: You can get to the campsite in a normal car, but a 17km 4x4 track is also available. Below: The ablutions are rustic but well equipped. It's a serene setting with the Thalu River running nearby.



very close to the campsite. The route isn't particularly difficult but it is very scenic.

The campsite's most attractive feature is the Thalu River that runs nearby. From what we were told, it's safe for swimming – no hippos or crocodiles – but one must be careful when it's flowing strongly.

The sound of running water close by is what makes this campsite so special, but if the weather's not conducive to camping, you can stay in the lodge. The chalets are well equipped, and the lodge has a swimming pool, restaurant, shop, conference room and bar.

All in all, whether you camp or not, Ithala is a great getaway option. If you haven't yet visited this park, I have little doubt that Ithala will pleasantly surprise you. **LW**

## CAMP FACTS

### Ablutions

**Condition:** Very rustic, but well equipped

**Toilets:** Flush toilets

**Showers:** Yes (outdoor)

**Hot water:** Yes, gas powered

### Facilities

**Electricity:** No

**Space for trailers and caravans:** Yes

**Braai:** Yes, steel bowls

**Swimming:** Yes, river and lodge pool

**Cellphone signal:** Very limited

**Drinking water:** Yes

**Firewood:** Yes, but pricey

### 4X4 trails:

Two grade 3 trails.

### Safety & security

The campsite feels safe because of its location near the rangers' station.

### Price

There's a variety of accommodation on offer, from camping (20 sites) and rustic bush chalets to a lodge chalet, close to reception. Prices vary

from R140 to R3200.

### Directions

Ithala Game Reserve is situated near Louwsburg in northern KwaZulu-Natal. From Durban, it's best reached via Eshowe and Melmoth to Vryheid. From Gauteng, the best approach is via Standerton, Volksrust and Utrecht to Vryheid.

### GPS coordinates

S27° 32 45.229  
E31° 18 48.551



# Be careful in summer

With winter finally behind us and summer in full swing, Johan Marais takes a look at a few myths about snakes and their behaviour



SNAKE TALK  
With Johan Marais

SNAKES IN  
SUMMER

**We're only a** month into summer and the snakes are already on the move. In the past week I have been called out for one Cape cobra bite, one boomslang bite and a really bad night adder bite on a three-year old child. Jason Seale of Hartebeespoort Snake and Animal Park has dealt with two puff adder bites and one from a stiletto snake.

Snakes in SA do not go into hibernation but become far less active in winter, many sheltering in underground burrows or in hollow tree trunks. On hot days, snakes may come out to bask. Some of them mate right into the winter, and in Gauteng this is true of both pythons and puff adders.

The main snakebite season is from January to April/May – hot and wet summer months – and during this period about 80% of snakebites are recorded in southern Africa.

Most victims are bitten at night and around the ankles when they accidentally stand on or near snakes. Otherwise, many victims are bitten on the hand.

The snake that accounts for the majority of serious bites in southern Africa is the Mozambique spitting cobra (*Naja mossambica*). This snake is well known for going into houses and lodges and biting people while they sleep. If you are on a farm or smallholding, or even in a suburb where these cobras are common, make sure your outer doors seal well at the bottom and even consider installing mosquito doors.

Many people are under the mistaken impression that they can keep snakes away with various repellents such as Jeyes Fluid, chlorine, old oil and commercial snake repellents, or by growing certain plants, including geraniums and garlic. There is no repellent that will keep snakes away, and if there are mice or frogs on your property, they will attract snakes. So keep your property clear of rubble, piles of rocks, sheets of corrugated iron lying on the ground, and similar places where snakes may hide. Water features attract frogs, and snakes will follow.

If you encounter a snake, keep a safe distance. If you are four or five metres away from any snake you are perfectly safe. There is no snake in Africa that will attack from



Left: It would be best to keep a safe distance from any snake. At 5m, you should be safe from an attack.  
Below: The venom of a black mamba affects a person's breathing, so you must get a victim to a hospital as soon as possible.

that distance, including the much-maligned black mamba (*Dendroaspis polylepis*). It is an extremely nervous snake that will bite with intent if cornered, but flee if given the opportunity.

And do not attempt to catch a snake – even a small one. Juvenile snakes are as venomous as their parents and there are several incidents each year in which someone rescues a small snake from a swimming pool, gets bitten and ends up in hospital.

In the unlikely event of a snakebite, keep the victim calm and get that person to the nearest hospital with a trauma unit. Most snakebite victims who reach a hospital within an hour or so survive the bite and its potential serious consequences. But time is of the essence.

For more details on first aid for snakebite, check out my latest book, *Snakes and Snakebite in Southern Africa*.

As for anti-venom, you need not worry

about who has anti-venom, and you should never try to use it yourself. It is also not vital to know what type of snake was responsible for a bite as doctors treat the symptoms and not the snakebite.


The biggest danger will be envenomation from a snake with a neurotoxic venom, such as the black mamba or Cape cobra. These venoms affect breathing and the victims may have to be placed on a ventilator until anti-venom is administered.

More than 80% of snakebite victims that are hospitalised do not receive anti-venom as it is not necessary. When needed, doctors use large quantities of anti-venom – usually more than 10 vials at around R1000 a vial – and with good results.

Many people are allergic to anti-venom as it is made from the blood of horses that are hyper immunised with snake venom, and such cases are treated with caution by doctors.

The potential shortage of Fav Afrique anti-venom has been in the news lately, and newspapers and radio stations have kept me busy with interviews.

Fav Afrique is a French product that is popular throughout Africa. It provides protection against the venom of 10 snake species (our polyvalent anti-venom provides protection against at least 12 snake species). It is certainly not the only anti-venom available in Africa and our own SAVP anti-venom can meet much of the demand. So it's no catastrophe, but there are bigger issues in Africa.

Because of the cost of anti-venom and the lack of primary health care, anti-venom is not reaching the areas where it is most needed, and rural people bear the brunt. Even in Swaziland there is a severe shortage of anti-venom as most hospitals do not have stock. 

*Leisure Wheels* readers are welcome to contact me about snake awareness and venomous snake handling courses. For more information, email me at: [johan@africansnakebiteinstitute.com](mailto:johan@africansnakebiteinstitute.com)



# An interesting concept

After spotting a small survival kit for sale, Glyn decided to have a go at building one of his own

**I recently spotted** a survival kit in a small tin on a website, and immediately fell for the concept. I love things that are compact and functional. I thought it would be a great idea to copy.

The advertised kit was in an Altoids tin – a brand of mints marketed as “Curiously Strong Mints” by their London-based parent company. There were an amazing number of tips on the internet on how to use an empty tin, and one pointed to the potential of a mini survival and first aid kit.

However, when I analysed this particular kit I realised that its contents were a bit broad, as they included items such as needles, thread and buttons, as well as plasters and antiseptic creams. These sat side by side with hardcore survival items such as hooks, sinkers and threads.

My personal challenge was to come up with a kit that I could keep in my cubbyhole, or move from vehicle to vehicle. It would comprise essential items that one should keep readily at hand on a trip.

The first task was to find a suitable tin. I did not have the real deal – an Altoids tin – but I wanted to stay as true to the concept as possible.

After much searching, I unearthed a suitable tin, though it was a bit larger than an Altoids tin. Then I got down to compiling the contents.

I settled on at least 10 indispensable items to make the idea work. (The tin had to close properly, so you couldn't fit in too much.)



Let's look at the results of my first attempt. The tin currently contains:

## Fire starter

This one I swear by as one often gets to a braai and finds that nobody has brought matches or a lighter.

## Swiss Tech multi tool

It's both functional and useful, featuring a star and flat screwdriver, as well as pliers. You can't fit it to a key ring, but as that only adds weight, it's not really a problem.

## Tool Logic card tool

This is extremely useful in an emergency. It gives you a variety of tools, including a knife, screwdriver, bottle opener, tweezers, pick and torch.

## Mini LED torch

No explanation needed. Also useful if you come home after dark to load shedding!

## Blade Tech knife sharpener

I thought about this one as it was something I could have left out, but then I came back to the idea of having a braai with a blunt carving knife!

## Vigil tyre pressure gauge

This is indispensable to an off-roader, but I also use it to check tyres after having them pumped at a service station, as many of the gauges are inaccurate.

## Fisher pen

I suppose one could drop this if you have a tablet or smartphone,

but it is always useful to have a decent pen and paper.

## Silva compass

If you are a photographer, it's always useful to work out where the sun will rise the next day.

## Moleskine notebook

Well, if you include a pen then the notebook is essential.

## Army mirror in cloth case

The survival element here is the ability to signal by using the mirror, but I also tend to shave in the shower, and in most cases there are no mirrors!

Well, I achieved 10 items, or slightly more if you include the multi-tools. I am not convinced that my selection is spot on, but it's a start. Why not send us an e-mail on the items you would pick, or better still, also send us a picture? **LW**



TRAVEL TIPS  
With Glyn Demmer

SURVIVAL KITS



# Leisure wheels

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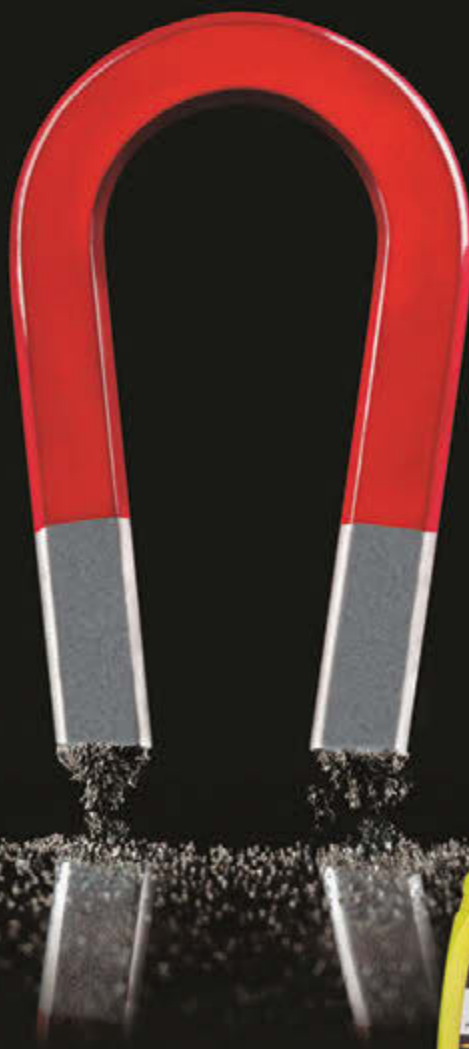
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# BUYER'S GUIDE: SUVs, MPVs & Double Cabs

A - B

**AUDI** Toll free: 0860 434 838 Website: [www.audi.co.za](http://www.audi.co.za)

| Q3 / RS Q3     | PRICE   | ENGINE  | POWER    | TORQUE   | L/100KM |
|----------------|---------|---------|----------|----------|---------|
| 1.4T S         | 402 500 | 4/1.4T  | 110/5000 | 250/1500 | 5.5     |
| 1.4T S auto    | 419 500 | 4/1.4T  | 110/5000 | 250/1500 | 5.8     |
| 2.0T quattro   | 499 000 | 4/2.0T  | 132/4000 | 320/1400 | 6.5     |
| 2.0TDI quattro | 515 000 | 4/2.0TD | 135/3500 | 380/1800 | 5.3     |
| RS Q3 quattro  | 769 500 | 5/2.5T  | 250/5300 | 450/1600 | 8.4     |

**Maintenance plan:** 5 years / 100 000 km

**Fuel tank:** 64 litres. **Average sales per month:** 127

» The Q3 is trendy, modern and – in typical Audi fashion – very well put together. The ride is sporty yet wonderfully comfortable and luxurious. It's not an off-roader, but it can deal with gravel tracks. We reckon that, as an overall package, this "Q" may be the best of the lot. Pricing is reasonably competitive, but the optional extra list will certainly add a lot more rands to the deal. **LW choice:** 2.0TDI quattro. **Also look at:** BMW X1, MINI Countryman, Mercedes-Benz GLA, Subaru XV



| A4 ALLROAD | PRICE   | ENGINE  | POWER    | TORQUE   | L/100KM |
|------------|---------|---------|----------|----------|---------|
| 2.0T       | 525 000 | 4/2.0T  | 165/4300 | 350/1500 | 7.0     |
| 2.0TDI     | 530 500 | 4/2.0TD | 130/4200 | 380/1750 | 6.0     |

**Maintenance plan:** 5 years/100 000 km

**Fuel tank:** 61 litres. **Average sales per month:** n/a

» More station wagon than SUV, the Allroad is a great option for those looking for something low-slung and nimble, but still (reasonably) rugged and spacious. The A4 isn't going to tackle any serious trails, but it can handle a dirt road, and it looks pretty funky with its black cladding. This is not a 4x4 in the traditional sense, but it is a great family vehicle. Perfect for those weekend visits to the farm! **LW choice:** 2.0 TDI. **Also look at:** Subaru Outback, Volvo V60 Cross Country / XC70



| Q5 / SQ5              | PRICE   | ENGINE   | POWER    | TORQUE   | L/100KM |
|-----------------------|---------|----------|----------|----------|---------|
| 2.0T S quattro        | 559 000 | 4/2.0T   | 132/4000 | 320/1500 | 7.5     |
| 2.0TDI S quattro      | 565 000 | 4/2.0TD  | 130/4200 | 380/1750 | 5.9     |
| 2.0TDI S quattro auto | 582 000 | 4/2.0TD  | 130/4200 | 380/1750 | 6.0     |
| 2.0T SE quattro       | 636 000 | 4/2.0T   | 165/4500 | 350/1500 | 7.9     |
| 3.0T SE quattro       | 722 500 | V6/3.0S  | 200/4750 | 400/2500 | 8.5     |
| 3.0TDI SE quattro     | 742 000 | V6/3.0TD | 180/4000 | 580/1750 | 6.4     |
| SQ5 TDI quattro       | 867 000 | V6/3.0TD | 230/3900 | 650/1450 | 6.8     |

**Maintenance plan:** 5 years/100 000 km

**Fuel tank:** 75 litres.. **Average sales per month:** 97

» Designed to fill the gap between the massive Q7 and the Q3, the Q5 is a dazzling piece of niche engineering. A highly aspirational vehicle, with the (very) few weak points far outweighed by the great ones. The turbocharged petrol engines are outstanding. **LW choice:** 2.0T quattro. **Also look at:** Subaru Forester, BMW X3, Mercedes GLC, Land Rover Discovery Sport, Porsche Macan, Lexus NX, Volvo XC60



| Q7             | PRICE   | ENGINE   | POWER    | TORQUE   | L/100KM |
|----------------|---------|----------|----------|----------|---------|
| 2.0T quattro   | 872 000 | 4/2.0T   | 185/5000 | 370/1600 | TBA     |
| 3.0TDI quattro | 924 000 | V6/3.0TD | 183/2900 | 600/1500 | 5.7     |

**Maintenance plan:** 5 years/100 000km

**Fuel tank:** 75 litres **Average sales per month:** 29

» The all-new Q7 is large and proud of it. It weighs significantly less than the old car and it makes use of a new and powerful 3.0-litre turbodiesel. It's nice to drive on the road and a fairly capable car off it. Its party piece is the way it just irons out a badly corrugated road. If it's comfort you're after, look no further. **LW choice:** Only one model, **Also look at:** BMW X5, Mercedes M-Class, Volvo XC90, Range Rover



**BMW** Toll free 0800 600 555 Website: [www.bmw.co.za](http://www.bmw.co.za)

| X1             | PRICE   | ENGINE  | POWER    | TORQUE   | L/100KM |
|----------------|---------|---------|----------|----------|---------|
| sDrive18i      | 402 656 | 4/2.0   | 110/6400 | 200/3600 | 7.7     |
| sDrive18i auto | 419 769 | 4/2.0   | 110/6400 | 200/3600 | 7.9     |
| sDrive20i      | 427 309 | 4/2.0T  | 135/5000 | 270/1250 | 6.9     |
| sDrive20i auto | 444 796 | 4/2.0T  | 135/5000 | 270/1250 | 6.7     |
| sDrive20d      | 441 923 | 4/2.0TD | 135/4000 | 380/1750 | 4.9     |
| sDrive20d auto | 460 539 | 4/2.0TD | 135/4000 | 380/1750 | 5.0     |
| xDrive20i      | 482 746 | 4/2.0T  | 135/5000 | 270/1250 | 7.5     |

|                |         |         |          |          |     |
|----------------|---------|---------|----------|----------|-----|
| xDrive20i auto | 499 822 | 4/2.0T  | 135/5000 | 270/1250 | 7.1 |
| xDrive20d      | 497 565 | 4/2.0TD | 135/4000 | 380/1750 | 5.5 |
| xDrive20d auto | 515 360 | 4/2.0TD | 135/4000 | 380/1750 | 5.4 |
| xDrive28i auto | 554 925 | 4/2.0T  | 180/5000 | 350/1250 | 7.2 |

**Maintenance plan:** 5 years / 100 000 km

**Fuel tank:** 63 litres. **Average sales per month:** 12

» The X1 still epitomises the funky next-generation crossovers, and armed with a range of state-of-the-art engines, the (modern) go is there to match the show. This is mainly the market it is aimed at the adventurous at heart who wants to head out onto dirt roads without fear of getting stuck or breaking down, with a mountain bike attached to the BMW's rear door. **LW choice:** xDrive20d. **Also look at:** MINI Countryman, Audi Q3, Mercedes GLA, Volvo V40 CC



| X3             | PRICE   | ENGINE  | POWER    | TORQUE   | L/100KM |
|----------------|---------|---------|----------|----------|---------|
| xDrive20i      | 548 938 | 4/2.0T  | 135/5000 | 270/1250 | 7.4     |
| xDrive20i auto | 566 607 | 4/2.0T  | 135/5000 | 270/1250 | 6.9     |
| xDrive20d      | 578 629 | 4/2.0TD | 140/4000 | 400/1750 | 5.0     |
| xDrive28i      | 648 809 | 4/2.0T  | 180/5000 | 400/1750 | 7.0     |
| xDrive30d      | 733 975 | 6/3.0TD | 190/4000 | 560/2000 | 5.7     |
| xDrive35i      | 758 990 | 6/3.0T  | 225/5800 | 400/1200 | 8.3     |

**Maintenance plan:** 5 years / 100 000 km

**Fuel tank:** 67 litres. **Average sales per month:** 81

» The X3 is (reasonably) big, fast, smart and all-round way better than the original X3. Especially driver-type drivers will love the way the X3 handles, and feels. And with up to 225 kW of power, it's fast enough too! It still doesn't like 4x4 driving. On gravel roads, in mud and sand, the powerful new X3 is quite capable, though. Run-flat tyres and off-road terrain, however, don't like each other at all. **LW choice:** xDrive20i. **Also look at:** Mercedes GLC, Audi Q5, Infiniti QX50, Land Rover Discovery Sport, Lexus NX, Porsche Macan, Volvo XC60



| X4        | PRICE   | ENGINE  | POWER    | TORQUE   | L/100KM |
|-----------|---------|---------|----------|----------|---------|
| xDrive20i | 661 707 | 4/2.0T  | 135/5000 | 270/1250 | 6.9     |
| xDrive20d | 664 629 | 4/2.0TD | 140/4000 | 400/1750 | 5.0     |
| xDrive28i | 725 809 | 4/2.0T  | 180/5000 | 350/1250 | 7.0     |
| xDrive30d | 811 475 | 6/3.0TD | 190/4000 | 560/1500 | 5.7     |
| xDrive35i | 820 990 | 6/3.0T  | 225/5800 | 400/1200 | 8.3     |

**Maintenance plan:** 5 years / 100 000 km

**Fuel tank:** 74 litres.. **Average sales per month:** 57

» BMW's rather unusual X6 SUV/coupe has received a smaller sibling in the form of the X4. Like the X3 is a more compact version of the X5, the X4 takes the design of the X6, and places it into a more compact package. It has AWD, but isn't really designed for off-road driving. The X4 is made for tar roads, combining the feel of a coupe with the ride height of an SUV. **LW choice:** xDrive30d. **Also look at:** Land Rover Range Rover Evoque, Porsche Macan, Lexus NX



| X5        | PRICE     | ENGINE  | POWER    | TORQUE   | L/100KM |
|-----------|-----------|---------|----------|----------|---------|
| xDrive35i | 912 400   | 6/3.0T  | 225/5800 | 400/1200 | 8.5     |
| xDrive30d | 925 694   | 6/3.0TD | 190/4000 | 560/1500 | 5.9     |
| xDrive40d | 1 045 296 | 6/3.0TD | 230/4400 | 630/1500 | 6.0     |
| xDrive50i | 1 157 670 | V8/4.4T | 330/5500 | 650/2000 | 9.6     |
| M50d      | 1 215 438 | 6/3.0TD | 280/4000 | 740/2000 | 6.6     |
| X5 M      | 1 722 659 | V8/4.4T | 423/6000 | 750/2200 | 11.1    |

**Maintenance plan:** 5 years / 100 000km

**Fuel tank:** 80 litres. **Average sales per month:** 112

» BMW has not strayed too far from its winning SUV formula. The X5 remains an elegant and sporty SUV, and continues to lead the segment. **LW choice:** xDrive30d. **Also look at:** Audi Q7, Mercedes-Benz/-AMG GLE, Infiniti QX70, Porsche Cayenne, Land Rover Range Rover Sport, Volvo XC90



| X6        | PRICE     | ENGINE  | POWER    | TORQUE   | L/100KM |
|-----------|-----------|---------|----------|----------|---------|
| xDrive35i | 993 503   | 6/3.0T  | 225/5800 | 400/1200 | 8.5     |
| xDrive40d | 1 098 912 | 6/3.0TD | 230/4400 | 630/1500 | 6.2     |
| xDrive50i | 1 220 273 | V8/4.4T | 330/5500 | 650/2000 | 9.7     |
| M50d      | 1 385 540 | 6/3.0TD | 280/4000 | 740/2000 | 6.6     |
| X6 M      | 1 757 659 | V8/4.4T | 423/6000 | 750/2200 | 11.1    |






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**Maintenance plan:** 5 years / 100 000 km. **Fuel tank:** 85 litres. **Average sales per month:** 28. **Maintenance plan:** 5 years / 100 000 km

» As the even sportier sibling of the X5, the X6 attempts to marry the sleek, sporty design of a coupe with the large frame of an SUV. Is it successful? We'll leave it up to you to decide, but the vehicle undoubtedly has a lot of presence on the road. **LW Choice:** M50d, if you can afford it. **Also look at:** Mercedes-Benz/AMG GLE Coupé, Porsche Cayenne, Land Rover Range Rover Sport



**CHEVROLET** Toll free 0800 422 777 Website [www.chevrolet.co.za](http://www.chevrolet.co.za)

| CAPTIVA     | PRICE   | ENGINE  | POWER    | TORQUE   | L/100KM |
|-------------|---------|---------|----------|----------|---------|
| 2.4 LT      | 366 500 | 4/2.4   | 123/5600 | 230/4600 | 8.8     |
| 2.4 LT auto | 384 000 | 4/2.4   | 123/5600 | 230/4600 | 8.8     |
| 2.2D LT     | 398 600 | 4/2.2TD | 135/3800 | 400/2000 | 7.9     |

**Service plan:** 3 years / 60 000 km **Fuel tank:** 65 litres.

**Average sales per month:** 97. » The Captiva has been a very good seller in its class. It's a good, honest package, offering quite a bit of car for the money. It even has seven seats, and an adult can actually sit in the last row without any ill-effects. The interior is loaded with standard kit – making the package all the more attractive. Sure, it has an electronic 4x4 system, but it doesn't like tackling dongas. **LW choice:** 2.4 LT. **Also look at:** Hyundai ix35, Kia Sportage, Nissan X-Trail, Subaru Forester



| TRAILBLAZER       | PRICE   | ENGINE  | POWER    | TORQUE   | L/100KM |
|-------------------|---------|---------|----------|----------|---------|
| 2.5D LT           | 439 300 | 4/2.5TD | 120/3600 | 380/2000 | 7.4     |
| 2.8D LTZ auto     | 518 700 | 4/2.8TD | 144/3600 | 500/2000 | 9.5     |
| 2.8D 4x4 LTZ      | 556 700 | 4/2.8TD | 144/3600 | 500/2000 | 9.0     |
| 2.8D 4x4 LTZ auto | 575 500 | 4/2.8TD | 144/3600 | 500/2000 | 9.5     |

**Service plan:** 5 years / 90 000 km **Fuel tank:** 76 litres

**Average sales per month:** 79 » The Trailblazer is probably the closest thing to a real rival the Toyota Fortuner has ever encountered. Based on the underpinnings of the sixth-generation Isuzu KB, and boasting a raft of new tech, safety, awesome packaging and powerful and modern new engines, the Blazer has – on paper – all that it takes to trump the Fortuner. Except a Toyota badge, that is. The 4x4 Trailblazer models have a part-time transfer case with 2H, 4H and 4LOW settings. Ample ground clearance combined with a range of electronic driving aids, and overall the Trailblazer is a pretty mean off-roader. However, the lack of a rear differential lock could be its undoing. **LW choice:** 2.8 LTZ 4x4 auto. **Also look at:** Toyota Fortuner, Mitsubishi Pajero Sport, Land Rover Discovery Sport



**CHRYSLER** Toll free 0800 CHRYSLER (0800 2479 7537) Website [www.chrysler.co.za](http://www.chrysler.co.za)

| GRAND VOYAGER  | PRICE   | ENGINE  | POWER    | TORQUE   | L/100KM |
|----------------|---------|---------|----------|----------|---------|
| 2.8CRD LX      | 609 990 | 4/2.8TD | 120/3800 | 360/1600 | 8.4     |
| 2.8CRD Limited | 698 990 | 4/2.8TD | 120/3800 | 360/1600 | 8.4     |

**Service plan:** 3-year/100 000km

**Fuel tank:** 76 litres. **Average sales per month:** 11

» The Grand Voyager offers a vast cabin and a nifty seating arrangement. All models are well equipped and the 2.8-litre turbodiesel engine offers a generous wallop of torque. It's getting on in life, so it's worth checking out competitor vehicles. **LW choice:** 2.8 CRD Limited **Also look at:** Kia Grand Sedona, Mercedes-Benz V-Class, Volkswagen Caravelle/California Beach



**CITROËN** Toll free 0860 211 112 Website: [www.citroen.co.za](http://www.citroen.co.za)

| C4 CACTUS        | PRICE   | ENGINE | POWER   | TORQUE   | L/100KM |
|------------------|---------|--------|---------|----------|---------|
| 60kW Feel        | 224 900 | 3/1.2  | 60/5750 | 118/2750 | 4.6     |
| e-THP 81kW Feel  | 259 900 | 3/1.2T | 81/5500 | 205/1500 | 4.7     |
| e-THP 81kW Shine | 284 900 | 3/1.2T | 81/5500 | 205/1500 | 4.7     |

**Service plan:** 5 years / 100 000 km

**Fuel tank:** 50 litres. **Average sales per month:** 22

» Citroën has introduced one of the funkiest little crossovers to arrive on the scene in quite some time. Sure, it doesn't have AWD and it doesn't boast tons of luggage space, but it does have trendy styling and a great engine. It also has enough ground clearance to ensure that you can travel on ugly gravel roads without hassle. Most importantly, the Cactus sports a very attractive price tag. Considering all it offers, the crossover offers great value for money. **LW Choice:** 1.2 Turbocharged Shine. **Also look at:** Renault Captur, Ford EcoSport, Peugeot 2008, Opel Mokka



| C4 AIRCROSS         | PRICE   | ENGINE  | POWER    | TORQUE   | L/100KM |
|---------------------|---------|---------|----------|----------|---------|
| 2.0i Attraction     | 313 900 | 4/2.0   | 113/6000 | 198/4200 | 7.5     |
| 2.0i Comfort        | 337 900 | 4/2.0   | 113/6000 | 198/4200 | 7.5     |
| 2.0i Seduction auto | 360 900 | 4/2.0   | 113/6000 | 198/4200 | 7.6     |
| HDi 115 Seduction   | 376 900 | 4/1.6TD | 84/3600  | 270/1750 | 4.6     |
| HDi 115 4WD Comfort | 387 900 | 4/1.6TD | 84/3600  | 270/1750 | 4.9     |
| 2.0i 4WD Exclusive  | 410 900 | 4/2.0   | 113/6000 | 198/4200 | 8.1     |
| 2.0i 4WD Exclusive  | 410 900 | 4/2.0   | 113/6000 | 198/4200 | 8.1     |

**Service plan:** 5 years / 100 000 km. **Fuel tank:** 63 litres.

**Average sales per month:** 8 » It's

cool, it's hip and it's rather pretty too. This is French manufacturer Citroën's new C4 Aircross – a suave compact SUV with French flair written all over it. Sure, it's not a real 4x4. But it's the Louis Vuitton of the soft-roader market. You'd never guess it, but this C4 Aircross is actually based on the Mitsubishi ASX and Outlander platform. Serious! The Citroën's intelligent 4WD system senses wheel slip and adjusts the power between the front and rear axles accordingly. The centre diff can be locked to provide a 50/50 split between the two axles. **LW choice:** HDi 115 Seduction. **Also look at:** Kia Sportage, Subaru XV, Hyundai ix35, Nissan Qashqai



**FIAT** Toll free 0800 FIATSA (0800 342872) Website [www.fiat.co.za](http://www.fiat.co.za)

| 500X                 | PRICE   | ENGINE | POWER    | TORQUE   | L/100KM |
|----------------------|---------|--------|----------|----------|---------|
| 1.6 Pop Star         | 310 900 | 4/1.6  | 81/5500  | 152/4500 | 6.4     |
| 1.4T Cross           | 344 900 | 4/1.4T | 103/5000 | 230/1750 | 6.0     |
| 1.4T Cross auto      | 359 900 | 4/1.4T | 103/5000 | 230/1750 | 5.7     |
| 1.4T Cross Plus      | 379 900 | 4/1.4T | 103/5000 | 230/1750 | 6.0     |
| 1.4T Cross Plus auto | 394 900 | 4/1.4T | 103/5000 | 230/1750 | 5.7     |

**Maintenance Plan:** 3 years / 100 000 km

**Fuel tank:** 48 litres. **Average sales per month:** 16

» This is the Italians' idea of what a Jeep Renegade should have looked like. It rides on the same platform as the Jeep and has the same interior, but Fiat offers a wider range of engines and specification levels. It's expensive for a compact crossover, but this little tyke will definitely stand out in a crowd. **LW choice:** We haven't driven one yet **Also look at:** Jeep Renegade, Opel Mokka



| ECOSPORT          | PRICE   | ENGINE  | POWER   | TORQUE   | L/100KM |
|-------------------|---------|---------|---------|----------|---------|
| 1.5 Ambiente      | 213 900 | 4/1.5   | 82/6300 | 138/4400 | 6.5     |
| 1.0T Trend        | 249 900 | 3/1.0T  | 92/6000 | 170/1400 | 5.7     |
| 1.0T Titanium     | 270 900 | 3/1.0T  | 92/6000 | 170/1400 | 5.7     |
| 1.5TDCi Trend     | 253 900 | 4/1.5TD | 66/3750 | 205/2000 | 4.5     |
| 1.5TDCi Titanium  | 274 900 | 4/1.5TD | 66/3750 | 205/2000 | 4.5     |
| 1.5 Titanium auto | 274 900 | 4/1.5   | 82/6300 | 138/4400 | 6.5     |



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## Service Plan: 4 years / 60 000 km Fuel tank:

52 litres. **Average sales per month:** 919 >>

Don't underestimate this little soft-roader – with 200mm ground clearance it's ready for that middlemanetjie. No AWD version is planned for SA as yet, though, as it makes up less than 10% of the Brazilian market, where the EcoSport made its debut. It's surprisingly spacious, light on fuel and easy to drive. **LW Choice:** 1.0T Titanium. **Also look at:** Nissan Juke, Opel Mokka, Renault Duster, Peugeot 2008



| RANGER           | PRICE   | ENGINE  | POWER    | TORQUE   | L/100KM |
|------------------|---------|---------|----------|----------|---------|
| SuperCab         |         |         |          |          |         |
| 2.5 Hi-Rider XL  | 277 900 | 4/2.5   | 122/5500 | 226/4500 | 10.9    |
| 2.2 Hi-Rider XL  | 319 900 | 4/2.2TD | 110/3700 | 375/1500 | 7.7     |
| 3.2 Hi-Rider XLS | 392 900 | 5/3.2TD | 147/3000 | 470/1500 | 9.3     |
| 3.2 4x4 XLS      | 441 900 | 5/3.2TD | 147/3000 | 470/1500 | 9.8     |
| 3.2 4x4 XLS auto | 455 900 | 5/3.2TD | 147/3000 | 470/1500 | 9.7     |

|                            |         |         |          |          |      |
|----------------------------|---------|---------|----------|----------|------|
| Double Cab                 |         |         |          |          |      |
| 2.5 Hi-Rider XL            | 308 900 | 4/2.5   | 122/5500 | 226/4500 | 10.9 |
| 2.2 Hi-Rider XL            | 328 900 | 4/2.2TD | 110/3700 | 375/1500 | 7.7  |
| 2.2 Hi-Rider XLS           | 412 900 | 4/2.2TD | 110/3700 | 375/1500 | 7.7  |
| 2.2 4x4 XL-Plus            | 402 900 | 4/2.2TD | 110/3700 | 375/1500 | 8.2  |
| 2.2 4x4 XLS                | 468 900 | 4/2.2TD | 110/3700 | 375/1500 | 8.3  |
| 3.2 Hi-Rider XLT           | 467 900 | 5/3.2TD | 147/3000 | 470/1500 | 9.3  |
| 3.2 Hi-Rider XLT auto      | 481 900 | 5/3.2TD | 147/3000 | 470/1500 | 9.1  |
| 3.2 4x4 XLT                | 526 900 | 5/3.2TD | 147/3000 | 470/1500 | 9.8  |
| 3.2 4x4 XLT auto           | 537 900 | 5/3.2TD | 147/3000 | 470/1500 | 9.7  |
| 3.2 Hi-Rider Wildtrak      | 491 900 | 5/3.2TD | 147/3000 | 470/1500 | 9.3  |
| 3.2 Hi-Rider Wildtrak auto | 501 900 | 5/3.2TD | 147/3000 | 470/1500 | 9.1  |
| 3.2 4x4 Wildtrak           | 558 900 | 5/3.2TD | 147/3000 | 470/1500 | 9.7  |

## Service plan: 5 years / 90 000 km Fuel tank:

80 litres. **Average sales per month:** 1 685

(July) >> The Ranger is really good-looking, powerful, offers good value for money, has loads of interior space and comfort, rides like a car, and even comes with a five-star Euro NCAP safety rating! So it's just about a full house from Ford. Rugged underpinnings are now complimented by modern technology such as traction control, hill start assist and so on, but only in the top versions. All the 4x4 derivatives get low range and a rear diff lock. **LW choice:** 2.2TDCi XLS 4x4. **Also look at:** Toyota Hilux, Nissan Navara, VW Amarok, Isuzu KB



| KUGA                 | PRICE   | ENGINE  | POWER    | TORQUE   | L/100KM |
|----------------------|---------|---------|----------|----------|---------|
| 1.5T Ambiente        | 328 900 | 4/1.5T  | 110/5700 | 240/1600 | 6.6     |
| 1.5T Ambiente auto   | 344 900 | 4/1.5T  | 132/5700 | 240/1600 | 7.0     |
| 1.5T Trend           | 365 900 | 4/1.5T  | 110/5700 | 240/1600 | 6.6     |
| 1.5T Trend auto      | 379 900 | 4/1.5T  | 132/5700 | 240/1600 | 7.0     |
| 1.5T AWD Trend       | 407 900 | 4/1.5T  | 132/5700 | 240/1600 | 7.7     |
| 2.0TDCi AWD Trend    | 433 900 | 4/2.0TD | 132/3750 | 400/2000 | 6.2     |
| 2.0T AWD Titanium    | 448 900 | 4/2.0TD | 177/5700 | 340/2000 | 8.8     |
| 2.0TDCi AWD Titanium | 468 900 | 4/2.0TD | 132/3750 | 400/2000 | 6.2     |

## Service plan: 4 years / 80 000 km for 1.5T

and 2.0T; 5 years / 90 000 km for 2.0TDCi

**Fuel tank:** 60 litres. **Average sales per month:** 300

>> The Kuga has been making waves with its long features list, EcoBoost engine and technological additions, like a hands-free tailgate mechanism, Curve Control and lane-keep assist. Like most crossovers in its segment, it's not too fond of the rough stuff. That being said, it does have AWD and 198mm of ground clearance, so it can tackle bad gravel roads without hassle. **LW choice:** 1.5 EcoBoost Trend. **Also look at:** Toyota RAV4, Honda CR-V, VW Tiguan



| TOURNEO CUSTOM       | PRICE   | ENGINE  | POWER    | TORQUE   | L/100KM |
|----------------------|---------|---------|----------|----------|---------|
| 2.2TDCi SWB Ambiente | 443 900 | 4/2.2TD | 74/3500  | 310/1300 | 6.5     |
| 2.2TDCi LWB Ambiente | 449 900 | 4/2.2TD | 74/3500  | 310/1300 | 6.5     |
| 2.2TDCi SWB Trend    | 464 900 | 4/2.2TD | 92/3500  | 350/1450 | 6.5     |
| 2.2TDCi LWB Trend    | 469 900 | 4/2.2TD | 92/3500  | 350/1450 | 6.5     |
| 2.2TDCi SWB Limited  | 510 900 | 4/2.2TD | 114/3500 | 385/1600 | 6.5     |

## Service plan: n/a. Fuel tank: 80 litres.

**Average sales per month:** n/a >> Ford's

Tourneo Custom offers a vast amount of space at a reasonable price. The ride quality is very good for what it is and the diesel engine delivers



adequate performance. It's not as refined or luxurious as some large MPVs, but as it's half the price, we're willing to forgive it. **LW choice:** 2.2TDCi SWB Limited. **Also look at:** Hyundai H-1, Kia Grand Sedona, Mercedes-Benz Vito, Volkswagen Kombi

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| TUNLAND              | PRICE   | ENGINE  | POWER    | TORQUE   | L/100KM |
|----------------------|---------|---------|----------|----------|---------|
| 2.8 off-road Comfort | 299 950 | 4/2.8TD | 120/3600 | 360/1800 | 8.3     |
| 2.8 off-road Luxury  | 319 950 | 4/2.8TD | 120/3600 | 360/1800 | 8.3     |
| 2.8 4x4 Comfort      | 384 950 | 4/2.8TD | 120/3600 | 360/1800 | 8.3     |
| 2.8 4x4 Luxury       | 404 950 | 4/2.8TD | 120/3600 | 360/1800 | 8.3     |

## Service plan: 2 years / 40 000 km for 4x2;

5 years / 70 000 km for 4x4 **Fuel tank:** 80 litres

**Average sales per month:** n/a >> This is

probably the best bakkie so far from China.

Which doesn't mean it's perfect, of course. It is

clearly modelled in size and style according to the

Hilux, but overall it really opens up a new playing

field for the Chinese. The Cummins engine is another plus point, as is the list of other

international partners. However, pricing is not as competitive as one would expect

from a Chinese brand, with the extra attention to quality obviously hiking the price. It

has 230mm ground clearance, a Borg Warner transfer case with 2H, 4H and 4LOW

settings, and it also has a Dana rear differential. It's a tough drivetrain that can handle

some punches. However, for now the lack of a rear differential lock means it can't

quite go where the rest of the bakkie clan can safely go. **LW choice:** 2.8TD 4x4

Comfort. **Also look at:** GWM Steed 5, Ford Ranger, Mitsubishi Triton, Toyota Hilux



**GWM** Toll free 011 805 6621 Website [www.gwm.co.za](http://www.gwm.co.za)

| M4  | PRICE   | ENGINE | POWER   | TORQUE   | L/100KM |
|-----|---------|--------|---------|----------|---------|
| 1.5 | 189 900 | 4/1.5  | 77/6000 | 138/4200 | 7.2     |

## Service plan: Optional 5 years / 60 000 km

**Fuel tank:** 45 litres. **Average sales per month:**

n/a >> The M4 is GWM's attempt at a small

crossover. And overall, this is an impressive

little car that offers exceptional value for money.

It boasts loads of features. It even has a five-

year/100 000km warranty and a five-year 45

000km service plan. Just don't take it very far off road! **LW choice:** We'll take it.

**Also look at:** Nissan Juke, Ford EcoSport, Suzuki SX4



| STEED 5        | PRICE   | ENGINE  | POWER    | TORQUE   | L/100KM |
|----------------|---------|---------|----------|----------|---------|
| 2.2L Lux       | 184 900 | 4/2.2   | 78/4600  | 190/2400 | 10.2    |
| 2.0VGT SX      | 229 900 | 4/2.0TD | 78/4000  | 225/1400 | 9.3     |
| 2.4L Lux       | 214 900 | 4/2.4   | 100/5200 | 200/4000 | 10.7    |
| 2.4L 4x4 Lux   | 239 900 | 4/2.4   | 100/5200 | 200/4000 | 10.7    |
| 2.0VGT Lux     | 259 900 | 4/2.0TD | 110/3600 | 310/1800 | 8.3     |
| 2.0VGT 4x4 Lux | 289 900 | 4/2.0TD | 110/3600 | 310/1800 | 8.3     |

## Service plan: Optional 5 years / 60 000 km

**Fuel tank:** 70 litres. **Average sales per month:**

n/a >> As far as Chinese double cabs go, the

Steed is one of the best. Sure, it's ultimately

not as refined or as plush as its Japanese

counterparts, but it's loaded with standard

kit. Prices remain very competitive. Armed with a reasonable amount of ground

clearance (195mm), and an electronic Borg Warner 4x4 system with low-range, the

4x4 Steed can go where most other double cabs go, albeit in a less refined manner.

**LW choice:** 2.0 VGT double cab. **Also look at:** Tata Xenon, Nissan NP300 Hardbody



| STEED 5E      | PRICE   | ENGINE  | POWER    | TORQUE   | L/100KM |
|---------------|---------|---------|----------|----------|---------|
| 2.4 SX        | 239 900 | 4/2.4   | 93/5250  | 200/2500 | 10.7    |
| 2.4 Xscape    | 256 900 | 4/2.4   | 93/5250  | 200/2500 | 10.7    |
| 2.0VGT SX     | 269 900 | 4/2.0TD | 105/4000 | 305/1800 | 8.3     |
| 2.0VGT Xscape | 289 900 | 4/2.0TD | 105/4000 | 305/1800 | 8.3     |

## Service plan: Optional 5 years / 60 000 km

**Fuel tank:** 70 litres. **Average sales per month:**

n/a >> GWM South Africa now offers a more

upmarket version of the Steed called the 5E. It is

still basically a Steed, and has the same engine

options, but is more luxurious and well equipped

than the standard Steed 5 model. Considering the pricing, the 5E offers a whole lot

of bakkie for your money, and is a great option for a leisure vehicle. **LW Choice:** 2.0

VGT Xscape. **Also look at:** Standard Steed 5, Steed 6, Foton Tunland, JMC Vigus



| H5       | PRICE   | ENGINE | POWER    | TORQUE   | L/100KM |
|----------|---------|--------|----------|----------|---------|
| 2.4 City | 244 900 | 4/2.4  | 100/5200 | 200/4000 | 10.3    |
| 2.4 Lux  | 249 900 | 4/2.4  | 100/5200 | 200/4000 | 10.3    |



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| 2.4 4x4 Lux         | 269 900 | 4/2.4   | 100/5200 | 200/4000 | 10.3 |
| 2.0VGT Lux          | 284 900 | 4/2.0TD | 110/4000 | 310/1800 | 7.6  |
| 2.0VGT Lux auto     | 319 900 | 4/2.0TD | 110/4000 | 310/1800 | 9.2  |
| 2.0VGT 4x4 Lux      | 319 900 | 4/2.0TD | 110/4000 | 310/1800 | 7.6  |
| 2.0VGT 4x4 Lux auto | 339 900 | 4/2.0TD | 110/4000 | 310/1800 | 9.2  |

**Service plan:** Optional 5 years / 60 000 km

**Fuel tank:** 74 litres. **Average sales per month:**

n/a >> The H5 certainly looks the part of the modern crossover/SUV/4x4. Inside it is loaded with standard kit, but some observers may not like the copycat exterior lines. Still, pricing is keen, and the 310 Nm turbodiesel version looks really good on paper. With 180mm ground clearance and Borg Warner low-range 4x4 system, the H5 4x4 derivative can go where few drivers of 4x4s costing double the price will expect it to go. **LW choice:** H5 2.0VGT 4x4. **Also look at:** Toyota Fortuner, Mitsubishi Pajero Sport



| H6         | PRICE   | ENGINE  | POWER    | TORQUE   | L/100KM |
|------------|---------|---------|----------|----------|---------|
| 1.5T City  | 259 900 | 4/1.5T  | 105/5600 | 210/2200 | 8.5     |
| 1.5T Lux   | 279 900 | 4/1.5T  | 105/5600 | 210/2200 | 8.5     |
| 2.0TCL Lux | 349 900 | 4/2.0TD | 105/4000 | 310/1800 | 6.7     |

**Service plan:** Optional 5 years / 60 000 km

**Fuel tank:** 58 litres. **Average sales per month:**

n/a >> The H6 is GWM's attempt at a more urban crossover vehicle. With Subaru Forester-like good looks and a decent price tag, the H6 should do well. No AWD model available, though. **LW choice:** 2.0TCL. **Also look at:** Ford Kuga, Toyota RAV4, Honda CR-V, JMC Landwind



| STEED 6       | PRICE   | ENGINE  | POWER    | TORQUE   | L/100KM |
|---------------|---------|---------|----------|----------|---------|
| 2.0VGT SX     | 299 900 | 4/2.0TD | 105/4000 | 305/1800 | 8.8     |
| 2.0VGT Xscape | 329 900 | 4/2.0TD | 105/4000 | 305/1800 | 8.8     |

**Service plan:** Optional 5 years / 60 000 km

**Fuel tank:** 70 litres. **Average sales per month:**

New >> Following the release of JMC's Vigus and Foton's Tunland, GWM has now also released its own large bakkie than offers the size and dimensions of those double cabs offered by established brands. The Steed 6 is an excellent vehicle overall, and shows how quickly GWM is improving. The cabin is wonderfully plush and has a European feel. Engine could use a tad more power, but that's hardly a deal-breaker. **LW Choice:** 2.0 VGT Xscape. **Also look at:** Foton Tunland, JMC Vigus, Steed 5E



**HONDA** Toll free 011 805 6621 Website [www.honda.co.za](http://www.honda.co.za)

| HR-V         | PRICE   | ENGINE | POWER    | TORQUE   | L/100KM |
|--------------|---------|--------|----------|----------|---------|
| 1.5 Comfort  | 299 900 | 4/1.5  | 88/6600  | 145/4600 | 6.2     |
| 1.8 Elegance | 354 900 | 4/1.8  | 105/6500 | 172/4300 | 6.8     |

**Service plan:** 4 years / 60 000 km. **Fuel tank:**

40 litres. **Average sales per month:** 179 >>

Honda's take on the compact crossover segment. We haven't driven it yet, but it looks handsome and Honda has been very generous with standard specifications. The petrol engines are fairly outdated for this segment, but power delivery is up there with the best. **LW choice:** We haven't driven it yet. **Also look at:** Jeep Renegade, Fiat 500X



| CR-V              | PRICE   | ENGINE | POWER    | TORQUE   | L/100KM |
|-------------------|---------|--------|----------|----------|---------|
| 2.0 Comfort       | 355 900 | 4/2.0  | 114/6500 | 192/4300 | 7.7     |
| 2.0 Comfort auto  | 370 900 | 4/2.0  | 114/6500 | 192/4300 | 7.6     |
| 2.0 Elegance      | 404 100 | 4/2.0  | 114/6500 | 192/4300 | 7.7     |
| 2.0 Elegance auto | 419 100 | 4/2.0  | 114/6500 | 192/4300 | 7.6     |
| 2.4 Executive AWD | 520 900 | 4/2.4  | 140/7000 | 220/4300 | 8.6     |
| 2.4 Exclusive AWD | 557 800 | 4/2.4  | 140/7000 | 220/4300 | 8.6     |

**Service plan:** 5 years / 90 000 km

**Fuel tank:** 58 litres. **Average sales per month:**

102 >> The sleek CR-V is a highly accomplished option in its segment, but don't expect to be left breathless with excitement when you drive it. It is extremely well put together, and has an impeccable reliability record. A new version was recently introduced that has added a whole lot of value for money options to the line-up. The Honda doesn't come close to being a real off-roader (ground clearance is limited and no low range is fitted). But then it doesn't pretend to be an off-roader, either. **LW choice:** 2.0 Comfort. **Also look at:** Nissan X-Trail, Renault Koleos, Toyota RAV4, Ford Kuga



**HYUNDAI** Toll free 0861 4272 22 Website [www.hyundai.co.za](http://www.hyundai.co.za)

| ix35                              | PRICE   | ENGINE  | POWER    | TORQUE   | L/100KM |
|-----------------------------------|---------|---------|----------|----------|---------|
| 2.0 Premium                       | 343 900 | 4/2.0   | 116/6200 | 192/4000 | 8.5     |
| 2.0 Premium Special Edition       | 364 900 | 4/2.0   | 116/6200 | 192/4000 | 8.5     |
| 2.0 Premium auto                  | 359 900 | 4/2.0   | 116/6200 | 192/4000 | 8.9     |
| 2.0 Premium auto Special Edition  | 379 900 | 4/2.0   | 116/6200 | 192/4000 | 8.9     |
| 1.7CRDi Premium                   | 369 900 | 4/1.7TD | 85/4000  | 260/1250 | 5.3     |
| 1.7CRDi Premium Special Edition   | 389 900 | 4/1.7TD | 85/4000  | 260/1250 | 5.3     |
| 2.0 Executive                     | 384 900 | 4/2.0   | 116/6200 | 192/4000 | 8.5     |
| 2.0 Executive Special Edition     | 399 900 | 4/2.0   | 116/6200 | 192/4000 | 8.5     |
| 2.0 Elite                         | 409 900 | 4/2.0   | 116/6200 | 192/4000 | 8.8     |
| 2.0 Elite Special Edition         | 424 900 | 4/2.0   | 116/6200 | 192/4000 | 8.8     |
| 2.0CRDi Elite                     | 439 900 | 4/2.0TD | 130/4000 | 383/1800 | 6.5     |
| 2.0CRDi Elite Special Edition     | 459 900 | 4/2.0TD | 130/4000 | 383/1800 | 6.5     |
| 2.0CRDi 4WD Elite                 | 500 900 | 4/2.0TD | 130/4000 | 392/1800 | 7.2     |
| 2.0CRDi 4WD Elite Special Edition | 520 900 | 4/2.0TD | 130/4000 | 392/1800 | 7.2     |

**Service Plan:** 5 years / 90 000 km

**Fuel tank:** 58 litres. **Average sales per month:**

n/a >> This CUV is even less intended for serious off-road use than the Tucson was. But the ix35 is a comfortable, affordable on-roader/soft-roader with trendy SUV looks. Mind, trendy is what sells cars in this segment, and the ix35 has got that department covered. The 4x4 derivatives get an electronic 4x4 system that apportions torque to slipping wheels, as required. 170mm limits its off-road range, though. Low-profile tyres and rough gravel roads also don't mix well. So it's good for good gravel, a wee bit of mud, and tar. **LW choice:** 2.0 Premium. **Also look at:** Kia Sportage, Nissan Qashqai, Ford Kuga, VW Tiguan



| H-1               | PRICE   | ENGINE  | POWER    | TORQUE   | L/100KM |
|-------------------|---------|---------|----------|----------|---------|
| 2.4 wagon GLS     | 445 900 | 4/2.4   | 126/6000 | 224/4200 | 10.2    |
| 2.5CRDi wagon GLS | 526 900 | 4/2.5TD | 120/3800 | 392/2000 | 9.8     |

**Service plan:** 5 years / 90 000 km

**Fuel tank:** 75 litres. **Average sales per month:**

n/a >> The H1 is getting on in life, but if you are in the market for something big, refined and with a generous amount of standard equipment, it's still worth looking at. The turbocharged diesel engine is preferred as the petrol powertrain is underpowered and very thirsty. **LW choice:** The 2.5 turbodiesel. **Also look at:** Chrysler Grand Voyager, Ford Tourneo Custom, Kia Grand Sedona, Mercedes-Benz Vito, Volkswagen Kombi / Caravelle



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| SANTA FE          | PRICE   | ENGINE  | POWER    | TORQUE   | L/100KM |
|-------------------|---------|---------|----------|----------|---------|
| 2.2CRDi Premium   | 571 900 | 4/2.2TD | 145/3800 | 436/1800 | 8.0     |
| 2.2CRDi 4WD Elite | 651 900 | 4/2.2TD | 145/3800 | 436/1800 | 8.3     |

**Service plan:** 5 years / 90 000 km **Fuel tank:** 64 litres. **Average sales per month:** n/a » Hyundai's Sante Fe is powered by the same 2,2-litre turbodiesel engine that did service in the previous range, so it gets 145 kW/436 Nm. A new addition is a FWD only model, and the six-speed automatic gearbox is standard across the range. It's also loaded with standard kit, including the latest in electronic safety systems. The latest Santa Fe has 185mm ground clearance – down 15mm from the previous generation Santa Fe's 200mm. With its on-demand 4x4 system (on the top models), the lack of low-range and an on-road bias for the suspension, the Santa Fe is now even more limited to gravel, and a tiny bit of mud and sand. **LW choice:** 2.2CRDi Premium. **Also look at:** Kia Sorento, Toyota Fortuner



**INFINITI** Toll free 0800 771 771 Website [www.infiniti.co.za](http://www.infiniti.co.za)

| QX50            | PRICE   | ENGINE   | POWER    | TORQUE   | L/100KM |
|-----------------|---------|----------|----------|----------|---------|
| 3.0d            | 596 949 | V6/3.0TD | 175/3750 | 550/1750 | 8.5     |
| 3.0d GT         | 637 824 | V6/3.0TD | 175/3750 | 550/1750 | 8.5     |
| 3.0d GT Premium | 679 230 | V6/3.0TD | 175/3750 | 550/1750 | 8.5     |
| 3.7 GT          | 629 070 | V6/3.7   | 235/7000 | 360/5200 | 12.2    |
| 3.7 GT Premium  | 670 476 | V6/3.7   | 235/7000 | 360/5200 | 12.2    |

**Maintenance plan:** 5 years / 100 000 km **Fuel tank:** 80 litres. **Average sales per month:** n/a » Infiniti's EX medium-sized crossover has been renamed to the QX50. It offers a lot of luxury, and decent engines, but can Infiniti coax buyers out of their German vehicles? A good vehicle, but probably too pricey for its own good. **LW Choice:** 3.0d GT. **Also look at:** Audi Q5, BMW X3, Land Rover Discovery Sport, Lexus NX, Volvo XC60, Mercedes GLC



| QX70            | PRICE   | ENGINE   | POWER    | TORQUE   | L/100KM |
|-----------------|---------|----------|----------|----------|---------|
| 3.7 GT          | 734 000 | V6/3.7   | 235/7000 | 360/5200 | 12.3    |
| 3.7 GT Premium  | 794 000 | V6/3.7   | 235/7000 | 360/5200 | 12.3    |
| 3.7 S           | 779 000 | V6/3.7   | 235/7000 | 360/5200 | 12.3    |
| 3.7 S Premium   | 839 000 | V6/3.7   | 235/7000 | 360/5200 | 12.3    |
| 3.7 S Black     | 852 500 | V6/3.7   | 235/7000 | 360/5200 | 12.3    |
| 3.0d GT         | 765 500 | V6/3.0TD | 175/3750 | 550/1750 | 9.0     |
| 3.0d GT Premium | 816 500 | V6/3.0TD | 175/3750 | 550/1750 | 9.0     |
| 3.0d S          | 801 500 | V6/3.0TD | 175/3750 | 550/1750 | 9.0     |
| 3.0d S Premium  | 861 500 | V6/3.0TD | 175/3750 | 550/1750 | 9.0     |
| 3.0d S Black    | 875 000 | V6/3.0TD | 175/3750 | 550/1750 | 9.0     |
| 5.0 S Premium   | 935 000 | V8/5.0   | 287/6500 | 500/4400 | 13.1    |

**Maintenance plan:** 5 years / 100 000 km **Fuel tank:** 90 litres. **Average sales per month:** 6 » Like the QX50, the QX70 faces an uphill battle. It is undoubtedly a very sporty and refined SUV, but its price places it in the same category as the German brands. If you want something different but still impressive, the QX70 is worth a look. **LW choice:** 3.0d GT. **Also look at:** BMW X5/X6, Land Rover Range Rover Sport, Porsche Cayenne, Volvo XC90



| QX80 | PRICE     | ENGINE | POWER    | TORQUE   | L/100KM |
|------|-----------|--------|----------|----------|---------|
| 5.6  | 1 265 000 | V8/5.6 | 298/5800 | 560/4000 | 14.8    |

**Service plan:** 5 years / 100 000km **Fuel tank:** 98 litres **Average sales per month:** 1 » The Infiniti QX80 is a humungous vehicle with a price tag to match. At the price it's certainly not cheap, but it offers better value for money than all of its main competitors. The 5,6-litre V8 is an absolute joy. It has loads of torque low down in the rev range, making it perfect for dune driving. The noises it makes are also lovely to listen to. It does consume an awful lot of fuel, though. **LW choice:** only one model **Also look at:** Land Rover Range Rover, Lexus LX, Mercedes-Benz GL



**ISUZU** Toll free 0800 422 777 Website [www.isuzu.co.za](http://www.isuzu.co.za)

| KB                 | PRICE   | ENGINE  | POWER    | TORQUE   | L/100KM |
|--------------------|---------|---------|----------|----------|---------|
| Extended Cab       |         |         |          |          |         |
| 250D-Teq Fleetside | 317 000 | 4/2.5TD | 100/3600 | 320/1800 | 7.6     |
| 300D-Teq LX        | 394 200 | 4/3.0TD | 130/3600 | 380/1800 | 7.7     |
| 300D-Teq LX auto   | 451 800 | 4/3.0TD | 130/3600 | 380/1800 | 7.7     |
| 300D-Teq 4x4 LX    | 407 500 | 4/3.0TD | 130/3600 | 380/1800 | 7.9     |
| Double Cab         |         |         |          |          |         |
| 250D-Teq Fleetside | 325 700 | 4/2.5TD | 100/3600 | 320/1800 | 7.7     |

|                      |         |         |          |          |     |
|----------------------|---------|---------|----------|----------|-----|
| 250D-Teq LE          | 406 200 | 4/2.5TD | 100/3600 | 320/1800 | 7.7 |
| 250D-Teq 4x4 LE      | 429 100 | 4/2.5TD | 100/3600 | 320/1800 | 7.9 |
| 300D-Teq LX          | 463 700 | 4/3.0TD | 130/3600 | 380/1800 | 7.8 |
| 300D-Teq LX auto     | 474 900 | 4/3.0TD | 130/3600 | 380/1800 | 7.7 |
| 300D-Teq 4x4 LX      | 523 600 | 4/3.0TD | 130/3600 | 380/1800 | 7.9 |
| 300D-Teq 4x4 LX auto | 529 700 | 4/3.0TD | 130/3600 | 380/1800 | 7.9 |

**Service plan:** 5 years / 90 000 km **Fuel tank:** 80 litres. **Average sales per month:** It's new » The facelifted KB brings Isuzu into the new millennium, with stability control now as standard. The top-spec models now also have top-notch infotainment systems that don't have to stand back for anything else in the segment. The 3,0-litre engine carries on as is, but can now be mated to an automatic gearbox. The new 2,5-litre turbodiesel offers adequate power at Joburg altitude, but it may struggle if you ask it to go any higher than that. **LW choice:** 250 D-Teq 4x4 LE. **Also look at:** Toyota Hilux, Nissan Navara, Mitsubishi Triton, Ford Ranger, Mazda BT-50, Volkswagen Amarok



**JEEP** Toll free 0800 1333 55 Website [www.jeep.co.za](http://www.jeep.co.za)

| RENEGADE              | PRICE   | ENGINE  | POWER    | TORQUE   | L/100KM |
|-----------------------|---------|---------|----------|----------|---------|
| 1.6L Longitude        | 340 990 | 4/1.6   | 81/5500  | 152/4500 | 6.0     |
| 1.4L T Limited        | 375 990 | 4/1.4T  | 103/5000 | 230/1750 | 6.0     |
| 1.6L Multijet Limited | 389 990 | 4/1.6TD | 88/3750  | 320/1750 | 4.6     |
| 2.4L 4x4 Trailhawk    | 435 990 | 4/2.4   | 137/6250 | 232/3900 | 9.8     |
| 1.4L T 4x4 Limited    | 450 990 | 4/1.4T  | 125/5500 | 250/2500 | 6.9     |

**Maintenance plan:** 3 years / 100 000 km **Fuel tank:** 48 litres. **Average sales per month:** 58 » The Renegade is a new sort of Jeep for a new sort of customer. Sure, it still boasts rugged off-road styling, but this is an SUV more at home in an urban environment than out in the bundu. More off-road oriented versions will arrive later on, but for now the Renegade is available in 4x2 only. Still, it can handle some pretty ugly gravel roads, so it should be a popular choice amongst trendy weekend warriors. It is (very) pricey, but finishes are undeniably premium. While the styling is Jeep, everything underneath is basically a Fiat 500X. The vehicle is even built in Italy. **LW Choice:** 1.4 Limited. **Also look at:** MINI Countryman, Nissan Qashqai



| COMPASS           | PRICE   | ENGINE | POWER    | TORQUE   | L/100KM |
|-------------------|---------|--------|----------|----------|---------|
| 2.0L Limited      | 377 990 | 4/2.0  | 115/6300 | 190/5100 | 7.6     |
| 2.0L Limited auto | 390 990 | 4/2.0  | 115/6300 | 190/5100 | 8.2     |

**Maintenance plan:** 3 years / 100 000 km **Fuel tank:** 51 litres. **Average sales per month:** 31 » The Compass looks reasonably sporty and seems to be well-equipped for the price, but the two-litre engine battles a bit at Highveld altitude. Price is good though. Jeep makes no pretensions of this Compass being a pukka 4x4. It is front-wheel driven, with 205mm ground clearance and traction control – so it can get you to a few 4x4-ish places, but it is much happier on a gravel road than a 4x4 track. **LW choice:** A Hemi V8 version? Pretty please? **Also look at:** Mitsubishi Outlander, Subaru Forester



| WRANGLER       | PRICE   | ENGINE  | POWER    | TORQUE   | L/100KM |
|----------------|---------|---------|----------|----------|---------|
| 3.6L Sahara    | 484 990 | V6/3.6  | 209/6350 | 347/4300 | 11.0    |
| 3.6L Rubicon   | 509 990 | V6/3.6  | 209/6350 | 347/4300 | 11.4    |
| 3.6L Rubicon X | 541 990 | V6/3.6  | 209/6350 | 347/4300 | 11.4    |
| Unlimited      |         |         |          |          |         |
| 3.6L Sahara    | 529 990 | V6/3.6  | 209/6350 | 347/4300 | 11.7    |
| 3.6L Altitude  | 542 990 | V6/3.6  | 209/6350 | 347/4300 | 11.7    |
| 3.6L Rubicon   | 554 990 | V6/3.6  | 209/6350 | 347/4300 | 11.9    |
| 3.6L Rubicon X | 579 990 | V6/3.6  | 209/6350 | 347/4300 | 11.9    |
| 2.8CRD Sahara  | 589 990 | 4/2.8TD | 147/3600 | 460/1600 | 8.3     |

**Maintenance plan:** 3 years / 100 000 km **Fuel tank:** 70 litres. **Average sales per month:** 72 » The Wrangler has genuine go-anywhere abilities, a turbodiesel engine option, an electronic stability programme and traction control, the option of four doors, and reasonably good quality. The latest generation V6 petrol engine has done wonders for eradicating that archaic driving experience of older Wranglers. Overall the Wrangler is still iconic, legendary, and looks just like it did before. But, it's now just way better! The Rubicon models, with even lower low-range gears, front and rear diff locks, a solid axle at both ends and heavy-duty rock rails, really can 4x4! **LW choice:** Unlimited 3.6L Rubicon. **Also look at:** Toyota Land Cruiser 70 / FJ Cruiser, Land-Rover Defender, Rooikat armoured vehicle





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| CHEROKEE           | PRICE   | ENGINE | POWER    | TORQUE   | L/100KM |
|--------------------|---------|--------|----------|----------|---------|
| 2.4L Longitude     | 512 990 | 4/2.4  | 130/6400 | 229/3900 | 8.3     |
| 3.2L Limited       | 553 990 | V6/3.2 | 200/6500 | 315/4300 | 9.5     |
| 3.2L 4x4 Limited   | 603 990 | V6/3.2 | 200/6500 | 315/4300 | 10.0    |
| 3.2L 4x4 Trailhawk | 654 990 | V6/3.2 | 200/6500 | 315/4300 | 10.0    |

**Maintenance plan:** 6 years / 100 000km

**Fuel tank:** 60 litres **Average sales per month:**

124 » Jeep's popular Cherokee has undergone a very dramatic reinvention. The latest model

looks nothing like its predecessor, and is based on the same underpinnings as the Dodge Dart,

which means it is essentially a crossover. The new Cherokee is also available in FWD. That said, the vehicle is apparently still very capable off road, with the "Trail Rated" Trailhawk model sporting low-range gearing, good ground clearance and all sorts of off-road aids. Build quality is truly excellent, but this increase in quality is reflected in the pricing. The Cherokee is a very pricey compact SUV. **LW choice:** 3.2 FWD Limited. **Also look at:** BMW X3, Land Rover Discovery Sport, Subaru Forester, Audi Q5, Mercedes GLC, Lexus NX, Infiniti QX50, Volvo XC60



| GRAND CHEROKEE  | PRICE     | ENGINE   | POWER    | TORQUE   | L/100KM |
|-----------------|-----------|----------|----------|----------|---------|
| 3.6L Limited    | 724 990   | V6/3.6   | 210/6350 | 347/4300 | 10.4    |
| 3.6L Overland   | 799 990   | V6/3.6   | 210/6350 | 347/4300 | 10.4    |
| 3.6L Summit     | 891 990   | V6/3.6   | 210/6350 | 347/4300 | 10.4    |
| 3.0CRD Limited  | 829 990   | V6/3.0TD | 179/3600 | 569/1800 | 7.5     |
| 3.0CRD Overland | 899 990   | V6/3.0TD | 179/3600 | 569/1800 | 7.5     |
| 3.0CRD Summit   | 999 990   | V6/3.0TD | 179/3600 | 569/1800 | 7.5     |
| 5.7L Overland   | 835 990   | V8/5.7   | 259/5200 | 520/4200 | 13.0    |
| SRT             | 1 099 990 | V8/6.4   | 344/6250 | 624/4100 | 14.0    |

**Maintenance plan:** 6 years / 100 000 km.

**Fuel tank:** 94 litres. **Average sales per**

**month:** 166. » Jeep's Grand Cherokee is big,

bold and capable. In fact, it boasts almost all the bells and whistles you'd find in the BMW X5 and

Discovery 4. The new family face as well as an

updated, 8-speed gearbox were added in August 2013, with the engine line-up and

drive train unchanged. **LW choice:** 3.6 Overland. **Also look at:** BMW X5, Land Rover

Discovery / Range Rover Sport, Mercedes GLE, Volvo XC90



**JMC Tel 011 668 0300 Website: www.jmcsa.co.za**

| JMC VIGUS       | PRICE   | ENGINE  | POWER   | TORQUE   | L/100KM |
|-----------------|---------|---------|---------|----------|---------|
| 2.4 LX          | 239 990 | 4/2.4   | 95/5300 | 201/4000 | 10.2    |
| 2.4 SLX         | 269 990 | 4/2.4   | 95/5300 | 201/4000 | 10.2    |
| 2.4 4x4 LX      | 305 990 | 4/2.4   | 95/5300 | 201/4000 | 10.7    |
| 2.4TDCi LX      | 269 990 | 4/2.4TD | 88/3800 | 290/1600 | 8.0     |
| 2.4TDCi SLX     | 299 990 | 4/2.4TD | 88/3800 | 290/1600 | 8.0     |
| 2.4TDCi 4WD LX  | 335 990 | 4/2.4TD | 88/3800 | 290/1600 | 8.2     |
| 2.4TDCi 4WD SLX | 365 990 | 4/2.4TD | 88/3800 | 290/1600 | 8.2     |

**Service plan:** 5 year / 60 000km

**Fuel tank:** 68-74 litres **Average sales per**

**month:** 1. » The Vigus is JMC's best product

yet, but it's still not on par with the mainstream

double-cab bakkies, nor a few other Chinese

products. If price is the main consideration, then it's definitely worth looking at. The

engines are based on powertrains that have been around for years. They're down

on power compared to the competitors, but at least you know the engine is going

to last. **LW choice:** a diesel 4x4 **Also look at:** Foton Tunland, SsangYong Actyon

Sports, used Hilux or Ranger.



| JMC LANDWIND | PRICE   | ENGINE | POWER    | TORQUE   | L/100KM |
|--------------|---------|--------|----------|----------|---------|
| 2.0T Lux     | 269 880 | 4/2.0T | 140/5500 | 250/2800 | 8.5     |

**Service plan:** 2 years/60 000km **Fuel tank:** n/a

**Average sales per month:** n/a. » JMC's first attempt at

offering an SUV locally. Little is known about the car, but

the claimed power output and fuel consumption figures

seem to be on a par with other vehicles of the same size. It

looks pretty decent, but we'll reserve comment until we have driven the vehicle. **LW**

**choice:** Only one model. **Also look at:** Renault Duster, used mid-size SUVs.



**KIA Tel 011 457 0200 Website: www.kia.co.za**

| SPORTAGE   | PRICE   | ENGINE | POWER    | TORQUE   | L/100KM |
|------------|---------|--------|----------|----------|---------|
| 2.0 Ignite | 349 995 | 4/2.0  | 116/6200 | 192/4000 | 8.7     |
| 2.0        | 381 995 | 4/2.0  | 116/6200 | 192/4000 | 8.7     |
| 2.0 auto   | 394 995 | 4/2.0  | 116/6200 | 192/4000 | 8.9     |

|                      |         |         |          |          |     |
|----------------------|---------|---------|----------|----------|-----|
| 2.0CRDi              | 411 995 | 4/2.0TD | 130/4000 | 382/1800 | 6.7 |
| 2.0CRDi auto         | 424 995 | 4/2.0TD | 130/4000 | 392/1800 | 7.3 |
| 2.0CRDi Tec auto     | 443 995 | 4/2.0TD | 130/4000 | 392/1800 | 7.3 |
| 2.0 AWD              | 416 995 | 4/2.0   | 116/6200 | 192/4000 | 8.7 |
| 2.0 AWD auto         | 429 995 | 4/2.0   | 116/6200 | 192/4000 | 8.9 |
| 2.0CRDi AWD          | 446 995 | 4/2.0TD | 130/4000 | 382/1800 | 6.7 |
| 2.0CRDi AWD auto     | 459 995 | 4/2.0TD | 130/4000 | 392/1800 | 7.3 |
| 2.0CRDi AWD Tec auto | 478 995 | 4/2.0TD | 130/4000 | 392/1800 | 7.3 |
| 2.0CRDi AWD Explore  | 499 995 | 4/2.0TD | 130/4000 | 392/1800 | 7.3 |

**Service plan:** 5 years / 100 000 km **Fuel tank:**

55 litres. **Average sales per month:** n/a » The

latest Sportage is a great vehicle. Smart, good

looking, safe, luxurious... it's got it all. Sharing its

underpinnings with the Hyundai ix35, the Kia has,

like the Hyundai, lost a bit of its off-road character

in favour of improved on-road performance. Pricing is extremely competitive, and

some of Kia's more mainstream opposition must be a little bit worried about the

latest wave of Kia products. With only 172 millimetres ground clearance and no

low-range, the 4x4 models are more suited to slippery roads than driving through

dongas. On gravel it is okay, but the trendy low-profile tyres are not very happy on

rough surfaces. **LW choice:** 2.0 Ignite. **Also look at:** Hyundai ix35, Nissan Qashqai,

Volkswagen Tiguan



| SORENTO        | PRICE   | ENGINE  | POWER    | TORQUE   | L/100KM |
|----------------|---------|---------|----------|----------|---------|
| 2.4 LS         | 379 995 | 4/2.4   | 127/6000 | 225/4000 | 9.2     |
| 2.2CRDi LX     | 499 995 | 4/2.2TD | 147/3800 | 440/1750 | 6.7     |
| 2.2CRDi AWD EX | 599 995 | 4/2.2TD | 147/3800 | 440/1750 | 6.7     |
| 2.2CRDi AWD SX | 634 995 | 4/2.2TD | 147/3800 | 440/1750 | 6.8     |

**Service plan:** 4 years / 90 000 km (LS)

**Fuel tank:** n/a. **Average sales per month:** n/a

» The Sorento offers exceptional value for money,

but not at the expense of quality, equipment and

a refined ride. It is spacious, making it the perfect

vehicle for families who have an active lifestyle

– a great package. **LW choice:** Diesel five-seater, but the entry-level petrol model

offers a lot of car at the price. **Also look at:** Chevrolet Captiva, Hyundai Santa Fe



| GRAND SEDONA | PRICE   | ENGINE  | POWER    | TORQUE   | L/100KM |
|--------------|---------|---------|----------|----------|---------|
| 2.2CRDi EX   | 499 995 | 4/2.2TD | 147/3800 | 440/1750 | 8.0     |
| 2.2CRDi SX   | 625 995 | 4/2.2TD | 147/3800 | 440/1750 | 8.0     |
| 2.2CRDi SXL  | 669 995 | 4/2.2TD | 147/3800 | 440/1750 | 8.0     |
| 3.3 V6 SX    | 605 995 | V6/3.3  | 199/6000 | 318/5200 | 10.9    |
| 3.3 V6 SXL   | 649 995 | V6/3.3  | 199/6000 | 318/5200 | 10.9    |



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Tel: 012 - 803 0092  
sales@powerbrake.co.za



**Maintenance plan:** 5 years / 100 000 km

**Fuel tank:** n/a **Average sales per month:** n/a

» This is the latest large MPV on the block and perhaps the best one yet. Available in seven- and 11-seat guise, with the option of either a diesel or petrol V6 engine, the Kia caters for large families who like to travel in comfort and style. It's well equipped and has a 5-star safety rating. **LW choice:** 7-seater diesel. **Also look at:** Chrysler Grand Voyager, Mercedes-Benz Vito / V-Class, Volkswagen Kombi / Caravelle / California Beach



**LAND ROVER** Toll free 0860 110 090 Website [www.landrover.co.za](http://www.landrover.co.za)

| DEFENDER                       | PRICE   | ENGINE  | POWER   | TORQUE   | L/100KM |
|--------------------------------|---------|---------|---------|----------|---------|
| 90 TD station wagon S          | 543 800 | 4/2.2TD | 90/3500 | 360/2000 | 10.0    |
| 90 TD station wagon Heritage   | 605 500 | 4/2.2TD | 90/3500 | 360/2000 | 10.0    |
| 90 TD station wagon Adventure  | 658 300 | 4/2.2TD | 90/3500 | 360/2000 | 10.0    |
| 110 TD station wagon S         | 583 200 | 4/2.2TD | 90/3500 | 360/2000 | 11.1    |
| 110 TD station wagon Heritage  | 667 300 | 4/2.2TD | 90/3500 | 360/2000 | 11.1    |
| 110 TD station wagon Adventure | 704 700 | 4/2.2TD | 90/3500 | 360/2000 | 11.1    |
| 110 TD S                       | 602 400 | 4/2.2TD | 90/3500 | 360/2000 | 11.1    |
| 130 TD crew cab E              | 611 300 | 4/2.2TD | 90/3500 | 360/2000 | 11.1    |

**Service plan:** None **Fuel tank:** 60 litres for

Defender 90; 75 litres for Defender 110/130..

**Average sales per month:** 32. » The Defender is now powered by a 2.2-litre four-cylinder turbodiesel engine with emissions that conform to Euro V standards. Still, it's a Defender, so you also get that gap between some panels, and the handling in corners is not exactly dynamic. But off-road, it still rates as one of the best. It's a legend in its own time. The permanently four-wheel-driven Defender is just about as good as it gets. In the past the lack of a standard rear diff lock was it's only downfall on axle twisters, but with the advent of the advanced traction control system, it doesn't stop. Well... mostly not. The new 2.2-litre engine is also up to the off-road task. **LW choice:** 110 station wagon. **Also look at:** Toyota Land Cruiser 70, Jeep Wrangler, a Sherman tank?



| DISCOVERY SPORT | PRICE   | ENGINE  | POWER    | TORQUE   | L/100KM |
|-----------------|---------|---------|----------|----------|---------|
| S TD4           | 545 901 | 4/2.2TD | 110/3500 | 400/1750 | 6.0     |
| S SD4           | 595 020 | 4/2.2TD | 140/3500 | 420/1750 | 6.3     |
| S Si4           | 598 200 | 4/2.0T  | 177/5800 | 340/1750 | 8.3     |
| SE SD4          | 640 320 | 4/2.2TD | 140/3500 | 420/1750 | 6.3     |
| SE Si4          | 643 500 | 4/2.0T  | 177/5800 | 340/1750 | 8.3     |
| HSE SD4         | 697 020 | 4/2.2TD | 140/3500 | 420/1750 | 6.3     |
| HSE Si4         | 700 200 | 4/2.0T  | 177/5800 | 340/1750 | 8.3     |
| HSE Luxury SD4  | 736 120 | 4/2.2TD | 140/3500 | 420/1750 | 6.3     |
| HSE Luxury Si4  | 739 300 | 4/2.0T  | 177/5800 | 340/1750 | 8.3     |

**Maintenance plan:** 5 years / 100 000km **Fuel**

**tank:** 65 litres **Average sales per month:** 137 »

The Land Rover Freelander is no more. Instead, we now have the Discovery Sport – a vehicle that is sportier and more stylish than its predecessor. The Freelander was never a phenomenal sales success for Land Rover SA, but the Disco Sport appears set to follow in the prosperous footsteps of the full-size Discovery, Evoque and Range Rover Sport. The Disco Sport isn't a hardcore 4x4, but it is an excellent all-round SUV – offering a good mix of on-road and off-road performance. If you're looking for a compact SUV that can play in the dirt, the Disco Sport is worth looking at. **LW choice:** SD4 S. **Also look at:** Jeep Cherokee, BMW X3, Mercedes GLC, Subaru Forester, Volvo XC60



| RANGE ROVER EVOQUE    | PRICE   | ENGINE  | POWER    | TORQUE   | L/100KM |
|-----------------------|---------|---------|----------|----------|---------|
| SE SD4                | 680 922 | 4/2.2TD | 140/3500 | 420/1750 | 6.3     |
| SE Si4                | 710 090 | 4/2.0T  | 177/5500 | 340/1750 | 8.3     |
| HSE Dynamic SD4       | 815 622 | 4/2.2TD | 140/3500 | 420/1750 | 6.3     |
| HSE Dynamic Si4       | 844 790 | 4/2.0T  | 177/5500 | 340/1750 | 8.3     |
| coupé HSE Dynamic SD4 | 815 212 | 4/2.2TD | 140/3500 | 420/1750 | 6.2     |
| coupé HSE Dynamic Si4 | 844 790 | 4/2.0T  | 177/5500 | 340/1750 | 8.3     |
| SD4 Autobiography     | 865 622 | 4/2.2TD | 140/3500 | 420/1750 | 6.3     |
| Si4 Autobiography     | 894 790 | 4/2.0T  | 177/5500 | 340/1750 | 8.3     |

**Maintenance plan:** 5 years / 100 000 km

**Fuel tank:** 58 litres for SD4; 70 for Si4.

**Average sales per month:** 84. » Stylish and fashionable, the baby Range Rover can actually go the off-road mile too. Classy, luxurious, trendy, seriously good looking – the Evoque is a fashion



model for the road and dirt. Sure, it doesn't have low range, but it gets the brand's Terrain Response system, as well at least 215mm ground clearance, and electronic tricks such as hill descent control. Add lots of horses to the package, and the Evoque can stay with at least a Freelander in a tough off-road environment. And that's pretty good! **LW choice:** SD4. **Also look at:** Porsche Macan, BMW X4, Lexus NX

| DISCOVERY | PRICE     | ENGINE   | POWER    | TORQUE   | L/100KM |
|-----------|-----------|----------|----------|----------|---------|
| TDV6 XS   | 731 386   | V6/3.0TD | 155/4000 | 520/1500 | 8.8     |
| SDV6 S    | 874 886   | V6/3.0TD | 183/4000 | 600/2000 | 8.8     |
| SCV6 SE   | 928 529   | V6/3.0S  | 250/6500 | 450/3500 | 12.0    |
| SDV6 SE   | 929 286   | V6/3.0TD | 183/4000 | 600/2000 | 8.8     |
| SCV6 HSE  | 1 024 429 | V6/3.0S  | 250/6500 | 450/3500 | 12.0    |
| SDV6 HSE  | 1 025 286 | V6/3.0TD | 183/4000 | 600/2000 | 8.8     |

**Maintenance plan:** 5 years / 100 000 km **Fuel**

**tank:** 82 litres for TDV6/SDV6; 86 for SCV6

**Average sales per month:** 115. » Building

on the impressive Disco III, with an even better 4x4 system, the Disco 4 is more competent on road and low quality has been addressed in the latest two versions. So, is Disco 4 now perfect? Well, it's very, very close. Armed with Landy's comprehensive and now updated Terrain Response System and air suspension (XS model has coil springs), the Disco can go anywhere, anytime. Nuff said. It is one of the best off-roader and on-road combination packages on the market today. **LW choice:** TDV6 XS. **Also look at:** Mercedes-Benz GLE, VW Touareg, Toyota Land Cruiser Prado, Volvo XC90



| RANGE ROVER SPORT                  | PRICE     | ENGINE   | POWER    | TORQUE   | L/100KM |
|------------------------------------|-----------|----------|----------|----------|---------|
| SCV6 S                             | 983 074   | V6/3.0S  | 250/6500 | 450/3500 | 11.3    |
| TDV6 S                             | 1 007 631 | V6/3.0TD | 183/4000 | 600/2000 | 7.9     |
| SCV6 SE                            | 1 080 774 | V6/3.0S  | 250/6500 | 450/3500 | 11.3    |
| SDV6 SE                            | 1 167 031 | V6/3.0TD | 215/4000 | 600/2000 | 7.9     |
| SCV6 HSE                           | 1 279 774 | V6/3.0S  | 250/6500 | 450/3500 | 11.3    |
| SDV6 HSE                           | 1 394 531 | V6/3.0TD | 215/4000 | 600/2000 | 7.9     |
| SCV6 HST                           | 1 393 074 | V6/3.0S  | 280/6500 | 450/3500 | 11.3    |
| Supercharged HSE Dynamic           | 1 521 023 | V8/5.0S  | 375/6000 | 625/2500 | 13.8    |
| SDV8 HSE Dynamic                   | 1 531 383 | V8/4.4TD | 250/3500 | 740/1750 | 8.7     |
| Supercharged Autobiography Dynamic | 1 664 323 | V8/5.0S  | 375/6000 | 625/2500 | 13.8    |
| SDV8 Autobiography Dynamic         | 1 675 283 | V8/4.4TD | 250/3500 | 740/1750 | 8.7     |
| SVR                                | 1 923 125 | V8/5.0S  | 405/6000 | 680/3500 | 13.8    |

**Maintenance plan:** 5 years / 100 000 km **Fuel**

**tank:** 85 litres for SDV6; 105 for other **Average sales**

**per month:** 78. » The latest Range Rover Sport

is a huge step up from the previous model in all aspects. The first Sport was based on the underpinning of the Disco, making it more of a Disco Sport than a Rangie Sport, really. The new one, though, is very impressive. It is lighter, sportier, prettier and far more plush than the old one. A real competitor in its segment. **LW choice:** SDV6 HSE. **Also look at:** Porsche Cayenne, Mercedes-Benz/AMG GLE, BMW X5/X6, Jeep Grand Cherokee, Volvo XC90



| RANGE ROVER                    | PRICE     | ENGINE   | POWER    | TORQUE   | L/100KM |
|--------------------------------|-----------|----------|----------|----------|---------|
| TDV6 Vogue                     | 1 572 578 | V6/3.0TD | 190/4000 | 600/2000 | 8.6     |
| SDV8 Vogue SE                  | 1 879 483 | V8/4.4TD | 250/3500 | 740/1700 | 8.7     |
| Supercharged Vogue SE          | 1 936 525 | V8/5.0S  | 375/6000 | 625/2500 | 13.8    |
| SDV8 Autobiography             | 2 113 483 | V8/4.4TD | 250/3500 | 740/1700 | 8.7     |
| Supercharged Autobiography     | 2 170 325 | V8/5.0S  | 375/6000 | 625/2500 | 13.8    |
| Range Rover L                  |           |          |          |          |         |
| L SDV8 Autobiography           | 2 202 283 | V8/4.4TD | 250/3500 | 740/1700 | 8.7     |
| L Supercharged Autobiography   | 2 259 125 | V8/5.0S  | 375/6000 | 625/2500 | 13.8    |
| L SDV8 SVAutobiography         | 3 038 483 | V8/4.4TD | 250/3500 | 740/1700 | 8.7     |
| L Supercharged SVAutobiography | 3 181 225 | V8/5.0S  | 405/6000 | 680/2500 | 13.8    |

**Maintenance plan:** 5 years / 100 000 km

**Fuel tank:** 85 litres for TDV6; 105 for other

**Average sales per month:** 26. » It's as

extravagant as a 100-person philharmonic orchestra, as elegant as the Queen herself, yet it is also as resilient as Bear Grylls when the going gets tough. It's the new Range Rover, now sporting an all-aluminium monocoque construction, and it is as decadent and as capable as ever. It has more technology than the Airbus A380, and enough plush luxury to keep Prince Charles happy. Moreover, it has all the gadgets and gears, and can go anywhere.







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But, even if that Lotto ticket comes through, we wouldn't want to test the Rangy's ultimate capabilities on a rough 4x4 track. It may get scratched! **LW choice:** SDV8 Autobiography. **Also look at:** Porsche Cayenne, Mercedes-Benz GL, Infiniti QX80, Lexus LX, Audi Q7

**LEXUS** Tel 011 809 9111 Website [www.lexus.co.za](http://www.lexus.co.za)

| NX           | PRICE   | ENGINE | POWER    | TORQUE   | L/100KM |
|--------------|---------|--------|----------|----------|---------|
| 200t E       | 550 700 | 4/2.0T | 175/4800 | 350/1650 | 7.9     |
| 200t EX      | 591 500 | 4/2.0T | 175/4800 | 350/1650 | 7.9     |
| 200t F-Sport | 673 100 | 4/2.0T | 175/4800 | 350/1650 | 7.9     |
| 300h EX      | 645 700 | 4/2.5e | 145e     | 210+e    | 6.0     |

**Maintenance plan:** 4 years / 100 000km

**Fuel tank:** 60 litres. **Average sales per month:** 27.

➤ Lexus' latest vehicle – the NX – is a compact and very stylish SUV. It has bold and aggressive styling that is sure to be controversial, but is undeniably eye-catching. Since this is a Lexus, its cabin is a joy to spend time in, and boasts every creature comfort imaginable. Shortcomings? Well, there are no diesel engines on offer. However, its turbopetrol mill is a great one. The Lexus NX isn't a hardcore 4x4, but it is a great fashion accessory. It even comes with its own little make-up mirror in the centre console! **LW choice:** NX 200t EX. **Also look at:** BMW X3 / X4, Land Rover Discovery Sport / Range Rover Evoque, Audi Q5, Jeep Cherokee, Mercedes GLE, Volvo XC60



| RX      | PRICE   | ENGINE  | POWER    | TORQUE   | L/100KM |
|---------|---------|---------|----------|----------|---------|
| 350 EX  | 748 800 | V6/3.5  | 204/6200 | 346/4700 | 10.6    |
| 450h SE | 951 300 | V6/3.5e | 220e     | ±550e    | 6.3     |

**Maintenance plan:** 4 years / 100 000 km

**Fuel tank:** 72 litres for 350; 65 for 450h

**Average sales per month:** 3. ➤ The latest Lexus RX is sleeker and more sophisticated than ever before. It was never designed for driving up Baboon's Pass, but instead offers an immensely classy and outstanding driving experience on tar, and a little bit of gravel. Anyone who wants to know what the term "refinement" means, just needs to take a spin in an RX. The hybrid offers the best of several worlds. We used to say that the RX, with its electronic 4x4 system, is only good on gravel. But after the hybrid version conquered Sani Pass we have to concede – it's still no pukka 4x4, but it certainly went places we never thought it could. **LW choice:** 450h SE. **Also look at:** BMW X5/X6, Mercedes-Benz GLE, Infiniti QX70, Volvo XC90



| LX     | PRICE     | ENGINE | POWER    | TORQUE   | L/100KM |
|--------|-----------|--------|----------|----------|---------|
| 570 SE | 1 364 400 | V8/5.7 | 270/5600 | 530/3200 | 14.8    |

**Maintenance plan:** 4 years / 100 000 km

**Fuel tank:** 93 litres. **Average sales per month:** 3

➤ If a Toyota Land Cruiser 200 is not quite posh and exclusive enough for you, here's the answer: the Lexus LX570. Essentially a Cruiser 200 under different sheet metal, with all the off-road goodies, this super-Cruiser features Lexus-ised styling, a new badge, and quite a lot more horsepower from a 5,7-litre V8 petrol engine, to fit in with the more upmarket "Lexus image". Luxury, performance and capability is out of the top drawer, as is refinement. **Also look at:** Infiniti QX80, Toyota Land Cruiser 200, Land Rover Range Rover, Mercedes-Benz GL



**MAHINDRA** Toll free 0861 624 4637 Website [www.mahindra.co.za](http://www.mahindra.co.za)

| GENIO DOUBLE CAB | PRICE   | ENGINE  | POWER   | TORQUE   | L/100KM |
|------------------|---------|---------|---------|----------|---------|
| Double Cab       |         |         |         |          |         |
| 2.2CRDe          | 219 995 | 4/2.2TD | 89/4000 | 290/1600 | 7,9     |

**Service plan:** 3 years / 100 000km. **Average**

**sales per month:** 11. ➤ **Fuel tank:** 74 litres

Arguably more workhorse than leisure vehicle, the Genio will nevertheless appeal to some looking for a family bakkie. It's got two rows of seating, a reasonably spacious loading area and Mahindra's impressive 2,2-litre mHawk engine. It doesn't have a 4x4 system, and ground clearance is a rather middling 195mm, but it'll be able to handle dirt roads. Price is its most attractive feature, but competition in this segment of the market is becoming rather stiff. **LW choice:** We'd probably go for the Scorpio Pik-Up. **Also look at:** Mahindra Scorpio Pik-Up, GWM Steed 5, Tata Xenon



| QUANTO  | PRICE   | ENGINE  | POWER   | TORQUE   | L/100KM |
|---------|---------|---------|---------|----------|---------|
| 2.2CRDe | 214 995 | 4/2.2TD | 89/4000 | 290/1600 | 7.6     |

**Service plan:** 3 years / 60 000 km **Fuel tank:** 55 litres. **Average sales per month:** 10 ➤ The Quanto is Mahindra's attempt at a funky compact SUV in the mould of the

Fiat Panda. Predictably, it doesn't have an AWD system, which keeps cost down, but there's still a lot of competition around R200 000 mark. **LW choice:** A Scorpio. **Also look at:** GWM M4, Ford EcoSport, Renault Duster



| SCORPIO                   | PRICE   | ENGINE  | POWER   | TORQUE   | L/100KM |
|---------------------------|---------|---------|---------|----------|---------|
| Pik-Up                    |         |         |         |          |         |
| 2.5TCI                    | 233 995 | 4/2.5TD | 74/3800 | 258/1800 | 9.9     |
| 2.5TCI 4x4                | 261 995 | 4/2.5TD | 74/3800 | 258/1800 | 9.9     |
| 2.2CRDe                   | 254 995 | 4/2.2TD | 89/4000 | 290/1600 | 8.8     |
| 2.2CRDe Adventure         | 287 995 | 4/2.2TD | 89/4000 | 290/1600 | 8.8     |
| 2.2CRDe 4x4               | 281 995 | 4/2.2TD | 89/4000 | 290/1600 | 8.8     |
| 2.2CRDe 4x4 Adventure     | 311 995 | 4/2.2TD | 89/4000 | 290/1600 | 8.8     |
| SUV                       |         |         |         |          |         |
| 2.2CRDe VLX               | 249 995 | 4/2.2TD | 89/4000 | 290/1600 | 8.8     |
| 2.2CRDe VLX Adventure     | 275 995 | 4/2.2TD | 89/4000 | 290/1600 | 8.8     |
| 2.2CRDe 4x4 VLX           | 289 995 | 4/2.2TD | 89/4000 | 290/1600 | 8.8     |
| 2.2CRDe 4x4 VLX Adventure | 315 995 | 4/2.2TD | 89/4000 | 290/1600 | 8.8     |

**Service plan:** 3 years / 60 000 km. **Fuel tank:**

60 litres. **Average sales per month:** 7. ➤ Still costing a fraction of the Big Name SUV prices, the Scorpio range offers a budget-priced alternative in the SUV and double cab markets. The new Adventure models are real value-for-money overlanders with bull bars, roof racks and more. An auto rear diff lock, shift-on-the-fly 4x4 selection, low-range gearing and a torque-laden engine means that for your money, you get decent off-roading ability. **LW choice:** Pik-Up 2.2CRDe 4x4. **Also look at:** Tata Xenon, GWM Steed, Mahindra Bolero



| XUV500         | PRICE   | ENGINE  | POWER    | TORQUE   | L/100KM |
|----------------|---------|---------|----------|----------|---------|
| 2.2CRDe W4     | 259 995 | 4/2.2TD | 103/3750 | 330/1600 | 7.1     |
| 2.2CRDe W6     | 299 995 | 4/2.2TD | 103/3750 | 330/1600 | 7.1     |
| 2.2CRDe W8     | 329 995 | 4/2.2TD | 103/3750 | 330/1600 | 7.1     |
| 2.2CRDe W8 AWD | 349 995 | 4/2.2TD | 103/3750 | 330/1600 | 7.1     |

**Service plan:** 3 years / 60 000 km

**Fuel tank:** 70 litres. **Average sales per month:**

53. ➤ Mahindra's compact SUV offering offers a surprising amount of car for the money. Sure, the styling is quirky and different, but the engine and gearbox, combined with loads of standard features and kit make up for the quirkiness. It's not intended as a bundu basher and while the AWD system comes with a list of driver aids, it's not fitted with a low-range box. **LW choice:** 2.2 W8 4x2. **Also look at:** GWM H5, JMC Landwind



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| BT-50            | PRICE   | ENGINE  | POWER    | TORQUE   | L/100KM |
|------------------|---------|---------|----------|----------|---------|
| FreeStyle Cab    |         |         |          |          |         |
| 2.2 SLX          | 313 100 | 4/2.2TD | 110/3700 | 375/1500 | 7.7     |
| 3.2 SLE          | 350 400 | 5/3.2TD | 147/3000 | 470/1750 | 9.3     |
| 3.2 SLE auto     | 362 400 | 5/3.2TD | 147/3000 | 470/1750 | 9.1     |
| 3.2 4x4 SLE      | 402 400 | 5/3.2TD | 147/3000 | 470/1750 | 9.8     |
| Double Cab       |         |         |          |          |         |
| 2.2 SLE          | 370 400 | 4/2.2TD | 110/3700 | 375/1500 | 7.7     |
| 3.2 SLE          | 402 400 | 5/3.2TD | 147/3000 | 470/1750 | 9.3     |
| 3.2 SLE auto     | 412 400 | 5/3.2TD | 147/3000 | 470/1750 | 9.1     |
| 3.2 4x4 SLE      | 454 400 | 5/3.2TD | 147/3000 | 470/1750 | 9.8     |
| 3.2 4x4 SLE auto | 466 400 | 5/3.2TD | 147/3000 | 470/1750 | 9.7     |

**Service plan:** 3 years / 90 000 km

**Fuel tank:** 80 litres. **Average sales per month:**

131. ➤ Mazda's new BT-50 may share its tough underpinnings with the Ford Ranger, but is clearly aimed more at the leisure than the workhorse market. The top-end models get all the latest safety and luxury kit. The styling polarizes opinions, but underneath it's just as capable as the other double cab bakkies in the leisure market. **LW choice:** 3.2 SLE auto. **Also look at:** Toyota Hilux, Ford Ranger, VW Amarok



| CX-5            | PRICE   | ENGINE  | POWER    | TORQUE   | L/100KM |
|-----------------|---------|---------|----------|----------|---------|
| 2.0 Active      | 319 500 | 4/2.0   | 121/6000 | 210/4000 | 6.4     |
| 2.0 Active auto | 329 300 | 4/2.0   | 121/6000 | 210/4000 | 6.4     |
| 2.0 Dynamic     | 329 600 | 4/2.0   | 121/6000 | 210/4000 | 6.4     |
| 2.2DE Active    | 378 300 | 4/2.2TD | 110/4500 | 380/1800 | 5.7     |
| 2.5 Individual  | 408 700 | 4/2.5   | 141/5700 | 256/3250 | 6.9     |
| 2.2DE AWD Akera | 465 400 | 4/2.2TD | 129/4500 | 420/2000 | 5.9     |

**Service plan:** 3 years / unlimited km

**Fuel tank:** 56 litres. **Average sales per month:**

233. ➤ The Mazda CX-5 used to be the rather forgettable SUV, but a recent model revision has changed all that. The range now includes entry-level FWD models, as well as a diesel AWD derivative. It's very good on tar, but the inclusion of an AWD model means it's now much better when the going gets tough. Quality and space are on par with competitor vehicles. **LW choice:** 2.2 DE Akera AWD. **Also look at:** Mitsubishi ASX, Nissan Qashqai, Hyundai ix35, Kia Sportage



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| GLA              | PRICE   | ENGINE  | POWER    | TORQUE   | L/100KM |
|------------------|---------|---------|----------|----------|---------|
| GLA200           | 440 849 | 4/1.6T  | 115/5300 | 250/1250 | 5.9     |
| GLA200 auto      | 458 747 | 4/1.6T  | 115/5300 | 250/1250 | 5.9     |
| GLA200CDI        | 465 000 | 4/2.1TD | 100/3400 | 300/1400 | 4.5     |
| GLA200CDI auto   | 483 000 | 4/2.1TD | 100/3400 | 300/1400 | 4.5     |
| GLA220CDI 4Matic | 538 631 | 4/2.1TD | 125/3400 | 350/1400 | 5.1     |
| GLA250 4Matic    | 614 288 | 4/2.0T  | 155/5500 | 350/1200 | 6.6     |
| GLA45 AMG 4Matic | 790 843 | 4/2.0T  | 265/6000 | 450/2250 | 7.5     |

**Maintenance plan:** 6 years / 100 000 km. **Fuel**

**tank:** 50 litres for GLA200, 200CDI; 56 litres

for 220CDI, 250 and 45 AMG **Average sales**

**per month:** n/a. ➤ All the models based on the

A-Class hatch have been a massive success so far and we have little reason to believe that it'll be any different for the GLA. It's quite expensive, but it seems to be worth the money. **LW choice:** GLA 220 CDI 4Matic. **Also look at:** Audi Q3 / RS Q3, BMW X1, MINI Countryman, Subaru XV, Volvo V40 CrossCountry



| GLE COUPÉ                  | PRICE     | ENGINE   | POWER    | TORQUE   | L/100KM |
|----------------------------|-----------|----------|----------|----------|---------|
| GLE350d coupé              | 1 006 774 | V6/3.0TD | 190/3400 | 620/1600 | 7.2     |
| GLE450 AMG coupé           | 1 110 057 | V6/3.0T  | 270/5500 | 520/1800 | 9.4     |
| Mercedes-AMG GLE63 S coupé | 1 876 111 | V8/5.5T  | 430/5500 | 760/1750 | 11.9    |

**Maintenance plan:** 6 years / 100 000 km. **Fuel**

**tank** 93 litres. **Average sales per month:** New. ➤

Mercedes finally has a competitor for the popular BMW X6 and it's very good. The GLE is relatively spacious and as comfortable as a Benz should be. The performance of the two petrol models is stunning, while the diesel unit makes sense on almost every level. **LW choice:** 450 AMG. **Also look at:** BMW X6, Range Rover Sport, Porsche Cayenne



| V-CLASS                 | PRICE   | ENGINE  | POWER    | TORQUE   | L/100KM |
|-------------------------|---------|---------|----------|----------|---------|
| V200CDI                 | 695 981 | 4/2.1TD | 100/3800 | 330/1200 | 6.5     |
| V200CDI auto            | 719 981 | 4/2.1TD | 100/3800 | 330/1200 | 6.1     |
| V220CDI                 | 726 875 | 4/2.1TD | 120/3800 | 380/1400 | 6.1     |
| V220CDI auto            | 750 875 | 4/2.1TD | 120/3800 | 380/1400 | 5.9     |
| V250 BlueTec            | 782 416 | 4/2.1TD | 140/3800 | 440/1400 | 6.0     |
| V220CDI Avantgarde      | 949 175 | 4/2.1TD | 120/3800 | 380/1400 | 5.9     |
| V250 BlueTec Avantgarde | 984 196 | 4/2.1TD | 140/3800 | 440/1400 | 6.0     |

**Maintenance plan:** 6 years / 100 000 km

**Fuel tank:** 80 litres. **Average sales per month:**

n/a. ➤ The V-Class is the ultimate lifestyle vehicle for large families. It seats eight people in supreme comfort and still has room for their luggage. The diesel engines are powerful yet frugal, which means you can cover long distances without stopping. It is very expensive, but you can see why. **LW choice:** 220 CDI **Also look at:** Volkswagen Caravelle



| GL            | PRICE     | ENGINE   | POWER    | TORQUE   | L/100KM |
|---------------|-----------|----------|----------|----------|---------|
| GL350 BlueTec | 1 163 031 | V6/3.0TD | 190/3600 | 620/1600 | 8.0     |
| GL500         | 1 324 387 | V8/4.7T  | 320/5250 | 700/1800 | 11.5    |
| GL63 AMG      | 1 991 537 | V8/5.5T  | 410/5250 | 760/2000 | 12.3    |

**Maintenance plan:** 6 years / 100 000 km

**Fuel tank:** 100 litres. **Average sales per**

**month:** n/a. ➤ If you like super-size meals,

super-size houses, and super-size swimming

pools, the super-size GL may be just your thing.

Since it was originally supposed to replace Merc's Gelandewagen 4x4, it gets all the tricks in the off-roading book. Ground clearance is 307mm and the Airmatic air suspension means it goes just about anywhere. It is also big on luxury and safety. Performance is plentiful too. **LW choice:** GL350 BlueTec. **Also look at:** Infiniti QX80, Lexus LX, Audi Q7, Land Rover Range Rover



| G-CLASS              | PRICE     | ENGINE   | POWER    | TORQUE   | L/100KM |
|----------------------|-----------|----------|----------|----------|---------|
| G300CDI Professional | 1 053 986 | V6/3.0TD | 135/3800 | 400/1600 | 11.7    |
| G350d                | 1 432 467 | V6/3.0TD | 180/3600 | 600/1600 | 9.9     |
| G63                  | 2 176 725 | V8/5.5T  | 420/5500 | 760/1750 | 13.8    |
| G63 Edition 463      | 2 301 725 | V8/5.5T  | 420/5500 | 760/1750 | 13.8    |

**Maintenance plan:** None for G300; 6 years/

100 000 km for G350d/G63. **Fuel tank:** 96

litres. **Average sales per month:** n/a. ➤ As

the preferred 4x4 for a vast number of military organisations across the globe, the Merc's off-road pedigree and durability is legendary. This is as good as it gets. Recently Mercedes added two more models to range – including the 400 kW G63 AMG model. You got to ask: do you really want so much power in a G-wagon? Still, it goes anywhere, with front, centre and rear diff locks, low-range that's selectable on the move, a 600mm forging depth, Merc's 4ETS traction control system and enough ground clearance to clear just about anything. **LW choice:** G350d. **Also look at:** A Second World War Panzerkampfwagen VI Tiger tank



**MINI** Toll free 0800 600 111 Website [www.mini.co.za](http://www.mini.co.za)

| MINI COUNTRYMAN             | PRICE   | ENGINE | POWER    | TORQUE   | L/100KM |
|-----------------------------|---------|--------|----------|----------|---------|
| Cooper                      | 343 283 | 4/1.6  | 90/6000  | 160/4250 | 6.5     |
| Cooper auto                 | 362 748 | 4/1.6  | 90/6000  | 160/4250 | 7.6     |
| Cooper S                    | 404 488 | 4/1.6T | 140/5500 | 260/1700 | 6.6     |
| Cooper S auto               | 423 543 | 4/1.6T | 140/5500 | 260/1700 | 7.5     |
| John Cooper Works ALL4      | 501 272 | 4/1.6T | 160/6000 | 300/2100 | 8.0     |
| John Cooper Works ALL4 auto | 518 890 | 4/1.6T | 160/6000 | 300/2100 | 8.3     |

**Maintenance plan:** 3 years / 75 000 km

**Fuel tank:** 47 litres. **Average sales per month:** 30

➤ A MINI gets five doors and the option of four-

wheel drive. Spacious, as trendy as anything you

can think of, and pretty fast too, this Mini offers

a lot of car for young jet setters. Of course, it's

not a 4x4 that can tackle a tough off-road course. Rather just the muddy patch at

the school's soccer field, with 149mm of ground clearance and a permanent all-

wheel drive system with plenty of assist programmes. Oh, and it's expensive too.

**LW choice:** Cooper S. **Also look at:** BMW X1, Nissan Juke, Opel Mokka, Audi Q3,

Mercedes-Benz GLA, Fiat 500X, Honda HR-V



| PACEMAN                     | PRICE   | ENGINE | POWER    | TORQUE   | L/100KM |
|-----------------------------|---------|--------|----------|----------|---------|
| Cooper S                    | 404 488 | 4/1.6T | 140/5500 | 260/1700 | 6.6     |
| Cooper S auto               | 423 543 | 4/1.6T | 140/5500 | 260/1700 | 7.5     |
| John Cooper Works ALL4      | 501 272 | 4/1.6T | 160/6000 | 300/2100 | 8.0     |
| John Cooper Works ALL4 auto | 518 890 | 4/1.6T | 160/6000 | 300/2100 | 8.3     |



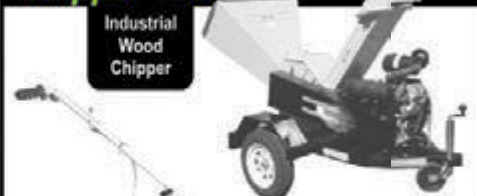
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**Maintenance plan:** 3 years / 75 000 km

**Fuel tank:** 47 litres. **Average sales per month:**

5. >> MINI's answer to the Evoque, the Paceman is the company's first "Sports Activity Coupe". While it's very similar to the Countryman it does have its own character, and with the ALL4 drivetrain offers quite a dynamic drive. Not truly meant for off-road but quite adept at traversing sticky or rutted roads, the Paceman is typically feature-packed and dynamic to drive. **LW choice:** Cooper S. **Also look at:** Land Rover Range Rover Evoque Coupé, Nissan Juke



**MITSUBISHI** Tel 011 552 6000 Website [www.mitsubishi-motors.co.za](http://www.mitsubishi-motors.co.za)

| ASX          | PRICE   | ENGINE | POWER    | TORQUE   | L/100KM |
|--------------|---------|--------|----------|----------|---------|
| 2.0 GL       | 299 900 | 4/2.0  | 110/6000 | 197/4200 | 7.5     |
| 2.0 GLX      | 334 900 | 4/2.0  | 110/6000 | 197/4200 | 7.5     |
| 2.0 GLS      | 347 900 | 4/2.0  | 110/6000 | 197/4200 | 7.5     |
| 2.0 GLS auto | 359 900 | 4/2.0  | 110/6000 | 197/4200 | 7.4     |

**Service plan:** 5 year / 90 000 km

**Fuel tank:** 63 litres. **Average sales per month:** 145.

>> The funky ASX is aimed squarely at the lifestyle segment, and for now only front-wheel drive is available. It is loaded with kit, it is safe as houses, it has reasonable performance, and traction control with hill start assist on the GLS models. It's not incapable, but a true soft-roader with great space and user-friendly features. **LW choice:** 2.0 GL. **Also look at:** Jeep Compass, Nissan Juke, Citroen C4 Aircross



| TRITON                         | PRICE   | ENGINE  | POWER    | TORQUE   | L/100KM |
|--------------------------------|---------|---------|----------|----------|---------|
| 2.5DI-D 4x4 double cab         | 429 900 | 4/2.5TD | 131/4000 | 400/2000 | 8.6     |
| 2.5DI-D 4x4 double cab Extreme | 449 900 | 4/2.5TD | 131/4000 | 400/2000 | 8.6     |

**Service plan:** 5 years / 100 000 km for 4x2;

5 years / 90 000 km for 4x4 **Fuel tank:** 75 litres.

**Average sales per month:** 43 (July) >> If one looks past the love-it-or-hate-it styling cues, the Triton is a solid and dependable option in the leisure bakkie market. Pricing remains competitive, and with standard low-range and a rear diff lock, it can keep up with any 4x4 double cab bakkie on the trail. An all-new Triton arrives 2016. **LW choice:** 2.5DI-D 4x4 double cab. **Also look at:** Toyota Hilux, Isuzu KB, Nissan Navara, Ford Ranger, Mazda BT-50, Volkswagen Amarok



| OUTLANDER      | PRICE   | ENGINE | POWER    | TORQUE   | L/100KM |
|----------------|---------|--------|----------|----------|---------|
| 2.4 GLS Exceed | 439 900 | 4/2.4  | 123/6000 | 222/4100 | 8.2     |

**Service plan:** 3 years / 90 000 km

**Fuel tank:** 60 litres. **Average sales per month:**

10. >> Mitsubishi's Outlander recently received a minor facelift. As with the previous model, a petrol powerplant is your only option. It's not built for serious off-roading, but it can handle the odd ugly dirt road thanks to its 4WD system. Mitsubishi SA has always struggled to sell the Outlander, which is a shame, since it's a solid vehicle that offers good value for money. The new model's design is, well, unique, so some might be put off a bit, but overall, this is a solid compact SUV. **LW choice:** We'll take it. **Also look at:** Subaru Forester, Toyota RAV4, Nissan X-Trail



| PAJERO SPORT     | PRICE   | ENGINE  | POWER    | TORQUE   | L/100KM |
|------------------|---------|---------|----------|----------|---------|
| 2.5DI-D auto     | 464 900 | 4/2.5TD | 131/4000 | 350/1800 | 8.5     |
| 2.5DI-D 4x4      | 499 900 | 4/2.5TD | 131/4000 | 400/2000 | 7.8     |
| 2.5DI-D 4x4 auto | 514 900 | 4/2.5TD | 131/4000 | 350/1800 | 8.5     |

**Service plan:** 5 years / 90 000 km. **Fuel tank:**

70 litres. **Average sales per month:** 41. >> The

Triton-based Pajero Sport has just received a new engine. The old 3.2-litre Di-D engine has been replaced with a 2.5-litre diesel mill that develops 131 kW of power and 400 Nm of torque (the auto model only has 350 Nm, for some reason). With loads of space, second- and third-row seating that fold completely flat, and a comfy three-link coil setup at the back, the Pajero Sport offers good value for money in a segment that is dominated by the Fortuner. At the moment, the Sport is available only in 4x4 guise, but a 4x2 model will hit showroom floors before the end of the year. **LW choice:** DI-D 4x4 manual. **Also look at:** Toyota Fortuner, Chevrolet Trailblazer, Land Rover Discovery Sport



| PAJERO                    | PRICE   | ENGINE  | POWER    | TORQUE   | L/100KM |
|---------------------------|---------|---------|----------|----------|---------|
| 3-door 3.2DI-D GLS        | 579 900 | 4/3.2TD | 140/3800 | 441/2000 | 10.1    |
| 5-door 3.2DI-D GLS        | 649 900 | 4/3.2TD | 140/3800 | 441/2000 | 10.1    |
| 5-door 3.2DI-D GLS Exceed | 669 900 | 4/3.2TD | 140/3800 | 441/2000 | 10.1    |

**Maintenance plan:** 5 years / 100 000 km

**Fuel tank:** 69 litres for 3-door; 88 for 5-door

**Average sales per month:** 38. >> The big Mitsubishi is consummately reliable, able and 99,9% of the time up to the task at hand. Nevermind great space, kit and features, the Super Select 4WD-II system allows for 4x4 engagement at speeds or up to 100 km/h. In 4H a viscous coupling unit and centre diff can direct drive to the front wheels if the rear wheels loose traction. The centre diff can be locked for enhanced traction on slippery surfaces (4HLC), and a low-range option (4LLC) is for really tough stuff. Add a lockable diff at the back, and 235mm ground clearance... just watch those flashy side-steps. **LW choice:** 3.2 DI-D GLX 5-door. **Also look at:** Land Rover Discovery, VW Touareg, Toyota Land Cruiser Prado



**NISSAN** Toll free 0800 647 726 Website [www.nissan.co.za](http://www.nissan.co.za)

| JUKE              | PRICE   | ENGINE  | POWER    | TORQUE   | L/100KM |
|-------------------|---------|---------|----------|----------|---------|
| 1.2T Acenta       | 258 700 | 4/1.2T  | 85/4500  | 190/2000 | 5.6     |
| 1.2T Acenta+      | 282 100 | 4/1.2T  | 85/4500  | 190/2000 | 5.6     |
| 1.5dCi Acenta+    | 304 400 | 4/1.5TD | 81/4000  | 260/1750 | 4.2     |
| 1.6T Tekna        | 330 800 | 4/1.6T  | 140/5600 | 240/1600 | 6.0     |
| 1.6T Tekna Techno | 360 200 | 4/1.6T  | 140/5600 | 240/1600 | 6.0     |
| 1.6T 4WD Tekna    | 370 300 | 4/1.6T  | 140/5600 | 240/1600 | 6.5     |

**Service plan:** 3 years / 90 000 km

**Fuel tank:** 46 litres. **Average sales per month:**

57. >> On the 'cool' metre the new Juke is about on the same level as the new Range Rover Evoque, yet it sells for less than half the price. The 140 kW version is one of the most surprisingly adept performance cars we've driven for a while. Ground clearance is only 180mm, so while they are a lot of fun on dirt roads, they're not trail vehicles. A 4WD version has recently been added to the line-up. **LW choice:** 1.5dCi Acenta+. **Also look at:** MINI Countryman/Paceman, Opel Mokka, Peugeot 2008, Fiat 500X, Honda HR-V



| QASHQAI            | PRICE   | ENGINE  | POWER    | TORQUE   | L/100KM |
|--------------------|---------|---------|----------|----------|---------|
| 1.2T Visia         | 287 500 | 4/1.2T  | 85/4500  | 190/2000 | 6.2     |
| 1.2T Acenta        | 317 800 | 4/1.2T  | 85/4500  | 190/2000 | 6.2     |
| 1.2T Acenta auto   | 334 200 | 4/1.2T  | 85/5200  | 165/1750 | 6.2     |
| 1.5dCi Acenta      | 338 800 | 4/1.5TD | 81/4000  | 260/1750 | 4.2     |
| 1.6T Acenta        | 364 800 | 4/1.6T  | 120/5600 | 240/2000 | 6.2     |
| 1.6dCi Acenta auto | 392 100 | 4/1.6TD | 96/4000  | 320/1750 | 4.9     |
| 1.6dCi AWD Acenta  | 393 400 | 4/1.6TD | 96/4000  | 320/1750 | 5.3     |

**Service plan:** 5 years / 90 000km. **Fuel tank:** 65 litres. **Average sales per month:**

266. >> Nissan has replaced its popular Qashqai with an all-new model. Will it sell



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|----------------------------|--------------|
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as well as its predecessor? We think so.

The Qashqai still offers great value for money, with solid engine options and loads of practicality. Luggage space could be a little bit better, but overall, the Qashqai is a solid package. The new model also looks sportier and more attractive than the old model, so we're willing to bet Nissan has another winner on its hands. **LW Choice:** 1.5 dCi Acenta. **Also look at:** Honda CR-V, Ford Kuga, VW Tiguan, Toyota RAV4, Mazda CX-5, Peugeot 2008



| NP300 HARDBODY  | PRICE   | ENGINE  | POWER    | TORQUE   | L/100KM |
|-----------------|---------|---------|----------|----------|---------|
| 2.5TDi Hi-rider | 341 500 | 4/2.5TD | 98/3600  | 304/2000 | 8.8     |
| 2.4 Hi-rider    | 322 400 | 4/2.4   | 105/5600 | 205/3600 | 11.0    |
| 2.4 4x4         | 389 500 | 4/2.4   | 105/5600 | 205/3600 | 11.7    |

**Service plan:** 3 years / 90 000 km

**Fuel tank:** 75 litres. **Average sales per month:**

197 (July). **>>** The older Nissan Hardbody, rebadged the NP300, has been re-employed to cater for the entry-level double cab market, with attractive prices to match. It may be old, but it's far from cold, and still offers a lot of dependable bakkie at an attractive price. The 4x4 version gets low-range and a limited slip rear diff, and tough-as-nails underpinnings. So it can go the off-road mile, its only limiting factor being the L/S rear diff, instead of a locking version. **LW choice:** 2.5TDi. **Also look at:** Toyota Hilux, Isuzu KB, GWM Steed



| X-TRAIL       | PRICE   | ENGINE  | POWER    | TORQUE   | L/100KM |
|---------------|---------|---------|----------|----------|---------|
| 2.0 XE        | 327 700 | 4/2.0   | 102/5200 | 198/4400 | 8.3     |
| 2.5 4x4 SE    | 364 200 | 4/2.5   | 125/6000 | 226/4400 | 8.3     |
| 1.6dCi XE     | 351 000 | 4/1.6TD | 96/4000  | 320/1750 | 5.1     |
| 1.6dCi 4x4 SE | 388 300 | 4/1.6TD | 96/4000  | 320/1750 | 5.3     |
| 1.6dCi 4x4 LE | 473 600 | 4/1.6TD | 96/4000  | 320/1750 | 5.3     |

**Maintenance plan:** 5 years/90 000km

**Fuel tank:** 60 litres. **Average sales per month:**

231. **>>** The X-Trail has undergone a very thorough exterior makeover. Gone is the boxy design of the old model, replaced with a sleek and sexy new exterior. That said, though, Nissan hasn't fiddled with its winning formula too much. The new X-Trail offers everything the old one did, but in a shiny and fancier package. A bunch of 4x2 models are available, but you can opt for a 4x4 version if you plan on tackling some gravel roads. Not a real off-roader, but a very practical family leisure vehicle. **LW choice:** 1.6 dCi SE. **Also look at:** Kia Sorento, Hyundai Santa Fe, Toyota RAV4, Honda CR-V



| NAVARA             | PRICE   | ENGINE   | POWER    | TORQUE   | L/100KM |
|--------------------|---------|----------|----------|----------|---------|
| KingCab            |         |          |          |          |         |
| 2.5dCi XE          | 362 100 | 4/2.5TD  | 106/4000 | 356/2000 | 8.7     |
| 2.5dCi 4x4 XE      | 406 400 | 4/2.5TD  | 128/4000 | 403/2000 | 9.0     |
| Double Cab         |         |          |          |          |         |
| 2.5dCi XE          | 379 700 | 4/2.5TD  | 106/4000 | 356/2000 | 8.7     |
| 2.5dCi 4x4 XE      | 430 600 | 4/2.5TD  | 128/4000 | 403/2000 | 9.0     |
| 2.5dCi LE          | 448 300 | 4/2.5TD  | 128/4000 | 403/2000 | 8.3     |
| 2.5dCi 4x4 LE auto | 514 100 | 4/2.5TD  | 140/4000 | 450/2000 | 9.0     |
| 3.0dCi V6 4x4 LE   | 659 500 | V6/3.0TD | 170/3750 | 550/1750 | 9.3     |

**Service plan:** 3 years / 90 000 km

**Fuel tank:** 80 litres **Average sales per month:**

94. (July) **>>** It is a big and powerful double-cab bakkie, with a comfortable SUV-like ride, and spacious cabin. It looks pretty good too. The 4x4 versions get all the right gizmos, like low range and rear diff lock. If the pilot knows his or her stuff, the Navara can walk the walk with the best of the double cab brigade. **LW choice:** 2.5 dCi 4x4 LE. **Also look at:** Ford Ranger, Toyota Hilux, Isuzu KB, Mitsubishi Triton



| PATROL   | PRICE   | ENGINE  | POWER    | TORQUE   | L/100KM |
|----------|---------|---------|----------|----------|---------|
| 3.0Di GL | 605 000 | 4/3.0TD | 118/3600 | 380/2000 | 10.8    |
| 4.8 GRX  | 698 000 | 6/4.8   | 190/4800 | 425/3600 | 17.7    |

**Service plan:** 3 years / 90 000 km

**Fuel tank:** 135 litres. **Average sales per month:**

1. **>>** The legendary Patrol is incredibly capable off-road, comfortable as a long-distance cruiser, and features on many wish lists of ardent overlanding enthusiasts. But it's also somewhat impractical to use as daily transport, thanks to its sheer size, and its affection for especially petrol. **LW choice:** 4.8 GRX. **Also look at:** Toyota Land Cruiser 200, Mitsubishi Pajero



**OPEL** Toll free 0800 422 777 Website [www.opel.co.za](http://www.opel.co.za)

| MOKKA                | PRICE   | ENGINE | POWER    | TORQUE   | L/100KM |
|----------------------|---------|--------|----------|----------|---------|
| 1.4 Turbo Enjoy      | 288 500 | 4/1.4T | 103/4900 | 200/1850 | 6.0     |
| 1.4 Turbo Enjoy auto | 298 500 | 4/1.4T | 103/4900 | 200/1850 | 6.6     |
| 1.4 Turbo Cosmo      | 325 500 | 4/1.4T | 103/4900 | 200/1850 | 6.0     |
| 1.4 Turbo Cosmo auto | 335 500 | 4/1.4T | 103/4900 | 200/1850 | 6.6     |

**Service plan:** 5 years / 90 000km **Fuel tank:**

53 litres. **Average sales per month:** 182. **>>**

The Opel Mokka is the German manufacturer's first attempt at building a compact SUV and it has done a pretty decent job. The engine is powerful, yet frugal and the cabin is a class above its direct competitors. It's available in front-wheel drive only, which means you're better off staying on the tar. **LW choice:** 1.4T Cosmo. **Also look at:** Ford EcoSport, Peugeot 2008, MINI Countryman, Nissan Juke



**PEUGEOT** Tel. 0860 738 472 Website [www.peugeot.co.za](http://www.peugeot.co.za)

| 2008       | PRICE   | ENGINE | POWER   | TORQUE   | L/100KM |
|------------|---------|--------|---------|----------|---------|
| 1.6 Active | 254 900 | 4/1.6  | 88/6000 | 160/4250 | 5.9     |
| 1.6 Allure | 282 900 | 4/1.6  | 88/6000 | 160/4250 | 5.9     |

**Maintenance plan:** 5 years / 100 000 km

**Fuel tank:** 60 litres. **Average sales per month:** 19. **>>**

One of the latest compact crossover to hit SA's shores, but it won't be crossing over anything anytime soon. It's available as a FWD only, but it comes with a peppsy 1.6-litre naturally aspirated engine and funky styling. **LW choice:** 1.6 Allure. **Also look at:** Ford EcoSport, Nissan Juke, Opel Mokka, Suzuki SX4, Fiat 500X, Honda HR-V



| 3008          | PRICE   | ENGINE  | POWER    | TORQUE   | L/100KM |
|---------------|---------|---------|----------|----------|---------|
| 1.6 Access    | 294 900 | 4/1.6   | 88/6000  | 160/4250 | 6.7     |
| 1.6T Active   | 344 900 | 4/1.6T  | 115/6000 | 240/1400 | 6.9     |
| 2.0HDi Allure | 422 900 | 4/2.0TD | 120/3750 | 340/2000 | 6.1     |

**Maintenance plan:** 5 years / 100 000 km

**Fuel tank:** 60 litres. **Average sales per month:** 4

**>>** The versatile Peugeot 3008 was recently given a facelift and this has turned it into one of the most attractive crossovers on the market. It's definitely tuned for on-road performance, which means it's a comfortable daily companion. A wide range of engines is available, so there's something for everyone. **LW choice:** 2.0 HDi Allure. **Also look at:** Nissan Qashqai, Hyundai ix35, Honda CR-V



**PORSCHE** Tel. 011 540 5000 Website [www.porsche.co.za](http://www.porsche.co.za)

| MACAN    | PRICE     | ENGINE   | POWER    | TORQUE   | L/100KM |
|----------|-----------|----------|----------|----------|---------|
| S diesel | 884 000   | V6/3.0TD | 180/4000 | 580/1750 | 6.1     |
| S        | 904 000   | V6/3.0T  | 250/5500 | 460/1450 | 8.7     |
| turbo    | 1 275 000 | V6/3.6T  | 294/6000 | 550/1350 | 8.9     |

**Maintenance plan:** 3 years / 90 000 km

**Fuel tank:** 60 litres for S diesel; 65 for S;

75 for turbo. **Average sales per month:** 3.

**>>** The Macan sets a new benchmark in terms of dynamic abilities. It's closer to a sports car than any SUV has the right to be, but it's comfortable on the daily run. It's smaller than the Cayenne and almost as expensive, but you get more equipment as standard. **LW choice:** S diesel. **Also look at:** Audi RSQ3/Q5/SQ5, BMW X4, Mercedes GLC, Land Rover Discovery Sport / Range Rover Evoque, Infiniti QX50, Lexus NX, Volvo XC60



| CAYENNE    | PRICE     | ENGINE   | POWER    | TORQUE   | L/100KM |
|------------|-----------|----------|----------|----------|---------|
| Cayenne    | 852 000   | V6/3.6   | 220/6300 | 400/3000 | 9.2     |
| diesel     | 933 000   | V6/3.0TD | 180/3800 | 550/1750 | 6.6     |
| S          | 998 000   | V6/3.6T  | 309/6000 | 550/1350 | 9.5     |
| S e-hybrid | 1 147 000 | V6/3.0Se | 306e     | 590e     | 3.4     |
| S diesel   | 1 165 000 | V8/4.1TD | 283/3750 | 850/2000 | 8.0     |
| GTS        | 1 176 000 | V6/3.6T  | 324/6000 | 600/1600 | 9.8     |
| turbo      | 1 779 000 | V8/4.8T  | 382/6000 | 750/2250 | 11.2    |
| turbo S    | 2 255 000 | V8/4.8T  | 419/6000 | 800/2500 | 11.5    |

**Maintenance plan:** 3 years / 90 000 km

**Fuel tank:** 100 litres. **Average sales per month:** 50 **>>**

By now, the Cayenne has more than proven itself as a luxury off-roader. It has power, torque, space, gadgetry, driver aids and





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off-road aids that most could only dream of. It has air suspension, lockers and good articulation, so it's capable, even if most drivers don't use it to its limits. As a driver's vehicle, the handling, road hold, passenger comfort and ride quality are superb. **LW choice:** S diesel. **Also look at:** BMW X5/X6, Land Rover Range Rover Sport, Mercedes GLE, Infiniti QX70, Volvo XC90

**RENAULT** Tel. 086 173 6285 Website [www.renault.co.za](http://www.renault.co.za)

| DUSTER               | PRICE   | ENGINE  | POWER   | TORQUE   | L/100KM |
|----------------------|---------|---------|---------|----------|---------|
| 1.6 Expression       | 215 900 | 4/1.6   | 77/5750 | 148/3750 | 7.6     |
| 1.6 Dynamique        | 233 900 | 4/1.6   | 77/5750 | 148/3750 | 7.6     |
| 1.5dCi Dynamique     | 254 900 | 4/1.5TD | 80/3900 | 240/1750 | 4.8     |
| 1.5dCi Dynamique 4WD | 269 900 | 4/1.5TD | 80/3900 | 240/1750 | 5.2     |

**Service plan:** 3 years / 45 000km **Fuel tank:**

50 litres. **Average sales per month:** 130 >>

Recently facelifted and better than ever. The new car is equipped with leather seats, cruise control and an improved sound system. We have lived with one for eight months now and it is as good off-road as it is on it. In our view, there's no other compact crossover that offers as much as this little tyke. **LW choice:** 1.5 DCI **Also look at:** Citroën C4 Cactus, Renault Captur, Kia Soul



| CAPTUR                    | PRICE   | ENGINE | POWER   | TORQUE   | L/100KM |
|---------------------------|---------|--------|---------|----------|---------|
| 66kW turbo Expression     | 219 900 | 3/0.9T | 66/5250 | 135/2500 | 4.9     |
| 66kW turbo Dynamique      | 239 900 | 3/0.9T | 66/5250 | 135/2500 | 4.9     |
| 88kW turbo Dynamique auto | 279 900 | 4/1.2T | 88/4900 | 190/2000 | 5.4     |

**Service plan:** 5 years / 100 000 km

**Fuel tank:** 45 litres. **Average sales per month:**

420. >> Arriving the same time as the all-new Citroën Cactus is the Renault Captur. And like the Cactus, the Captur is a funky little crossover built for hip and trendy urbanites. The Captur is available in 2WD only, and unlike the Renault Duster, isn't really designed for the bundu. This is a pretty and well equipped compact crossover built for those who want the space and trendiness of an SUV, but don't need the off-road ability. As with the Cactus, pricing is very competitive. **LW choice:** Dynamique 88kW Turbo EDC. **Also look at:** Citroën C4 Cactus, Ford EcoSport, Peugeot 2008, Opel Mokka, Fiat 500X, Nissan Juke, Honda HR-V



| KOLEOS                 | PRICE   | ENGINE | POWER    | TORQUE   | L/100KM |
|------------------------|---------|--------|----------|----------|---------|
| 2.5 Dynamique          | 339 900 | 4/2.5  | 126/6000 | 226/4400 | 9.6     |
| 2.5 4x4 Dynamique      | 369 900 | 4/2.5  | 126/6000 | 226/4400 | 9.9     |
| 2.5 4x4 Dynamique auto | 399 900 | 4/2.5  | 126/6000 | 226/4400 | 9.6     |

**Service plan:** 5 years / 100 000 km

**Fuel tank:** 65 litres. **Average sales per month:**

n/a. >> With 206mm of ground clearance and the Nissan X-Trail's All-Mode 4x4 system, the Koleos can go surprisingly far off the beaten track. But, no low range and other locking bits ensure that real off-roading is also not its thing. It much prefers dirt roads to dongas. The diesel model is no longer sold here, but the range still offers good value for buyers looking for something with X-Trail capability and a bit of flair. **LW choice:** 2.5 Dynamique. **Also look at:** Honda CR-V, Toyota RAV4, Nissan Qashqai / X-Trail



**SSANGYONG** Tel. 012 661 3161 Website [www.mahindra.co.za](http://www.mahindra.co.za)

| KORANDO | PRICE   | ENGINE | POWER    | TORQUE   | L/100KM |
|---------|---------|--------|----------|----------|---------|
| 2.0     | 324 995 | 4/2.0  | 110/6000 | 197/4000 | 7.5     |

**Service plan:** 5 years / 90 000 km

**Fuel tank:** 57 litres. **Average sales per month:** 1 >>

The new Korando is a modern crossover, featuring a monocoque design, and an independent suspension set-up. The latest Korando, boasting minor upgrades, looks amazingly normal, and it is now distributed here by Mahindra SA. Although it is cheaper in some instances, the service plan has also shrunk. It has 180mm ground clearance, and in the AWD model the system normally sends all the power to the front wheels but as soon as wheelslip is detected the rear wheels also get a piece of the action. The driver can also lock the system in a 50/50 split at speeds slower than 40km/h. **LW choice:** Only 1 model. **Also look at:** Kia Sportage, Hyundai ix35, Toyota RAV4



| ACTYON SPORTS   | PRICE   | ENGINE  | POWER    | TORQUE   | L/100KM |
|-----------------|---------|---------|----------|----------|---------|
| 2.3 4x4 high    | 289 995 | 4/2.3   | 110/5500 | 214/3500 | 12.4    |
| 2.0D high       | 309 995 | 4/2.0TD | 114/4000 | 360/1500 | 7.4     |
| 2.0D 4x4 Deluxe | 359 995 | 4/2.0TD | 114/4000 | 360/1500 | 7.5     |

**Service plan:** 5 years / 90 000 km. **Fuel tank:** 75 litres. **Average sales per month:** 1. >> With upgraded looks and new engine options, the Actyon Sports is a highly

competitive and capable double cab bakkie, although its load carrying capacity puts it below the rest. It's comfortable, has a good stability program and can be very dynamic off-road. It's not mean for trail driving, however, and can tackle medium grade courses with its low-range gearing. It's also great in sand and mud. **LW choice:** 2.0D high. **Also look at:** Tata Xenon, GWM Steed, Mahindra Scorpio



| REXTON W        | PRICE   | ENGINE  | POWER    | TORQUE   | L/100KM |
|-----------------|---------|---------|----------|----------|---------|
| RX270XDi        | 394 995 | 5/2.7TD | 121/4000 | 340/1800 | 8.6     |
| RX270XDi Deluxe | 449 995 | 5/2.7TD | 121/4000 | 340/1800 | 9.0     |

**Service plan:** 5 years / 90 000 km. **Fuel tank:** 78 litres.

**Average sales per month:** n/a. >> Ssangyong

has updated their large SUV, a seven-seater with a part-time 4x4 drivetrain and plenty of modern features like Bluetooth and cruise control. Drive can be locked in four-high or low-range gearing, making it a well equipped, affordable option. It's undoubtedly better looking, but the previous Rexton's sales figures won't be hard to beat, and Ssangyong has a long way to go to convince buyers to get behind the wheel. The update does, however, see considerable improvement to the interior. **LW choice:** RX270XDi. **Also look at:** GWM H5 4x4, Mahindra XUV500



**SUBARU** Tel. 011 608 0116 Website [www.subaru.co.za](http://www.subaru.co.za)

| XV        | PRICE   | ENGINE | POWER    | TORQUE   | L/100KM |
|-----------|---------|--------|----------|----------|---------|
| 2.0i      | 317 300 | b4/2.0 | 110/6200 | 196/4200 | 8.0     |
| 2.0i auto | 328 600 | b4/2.0 | 110/6200 | 196/4200 | 7.9     |
| 2.0i-S    | 364 600 | b4/2.0 | 110/6200 | 196/4200 | 7.9     |

**Maintenance plan:** 3 years / 75 000 km

**Fuel tank:** 60 litres. **Average sales per month:**

53. >> The funky XV, which is based on the Impreza hatch, is really cool piece of four-wheel driven kit. With the new models, it's highly competitive, and surprisingly capable off-road for a soft-roader. It's not as dynamic a drive as you might expect from Subaru, but its' a unique offering in a very competitive segment, with 220mm ground clearance and Subaru's highly capable all-wheel drive system. **LW choice:** 2.0i. **Also look at:** Mitsubishi ASX, Mercedes-Benz GLA



| FORESTER | PRICE   | ENGINE | POWER    | TORQUE   | L/100KM |
|----------|---------|--------|----------|----------|---------|
| 2.0 X    | 349 000 | b4/2.0 | 110/6200 | 198/4200 | 7.2     |
| 2.5 X    | 385 300 | b4/2.5 | 126/5800 | 235/4100 | 8.1     |
| 2.5 XS   | 419 200 | b4/2.5 | 126/5800 | 235/4100 | 8.1     |



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|                |         |         |          |          |     |
|----------------|---------|---------|----------|----------|-----|
| 2.5 XS Premium | 462 500 | b4/2.5  | 126/5800 | 235/4100 | 8.1 |
| 2.0 XT         | 539 300 | b4/2.0T | 177/5600 | 350/2400 | 8.5 |

**Maintenance plan:** 3 years / 75 000 km **Fuel tank:**

65 litres. **Average sales per month:** 64 >> The good-looking Forester has just been refreshed and it's a dream to drive. The Forester has already won the hearts of many loyal fans, and with good reason. It's got great quality, practicality and the turbocharged XT is SUV performance heaven. It handles well both on and off-road, and the new X-Mode gives it a slight edge in the rough over the previous model. They've also spent a lot on developing a more fuel efficient Forester, which is bound to pay off in the sales department. **LW choice:** 2.5 XS. **Also look at:** Suzuki Grand Vitara, Nissan X-Trail



| OUTBACK         | PRICE   | ENGINE   | POWER    | TORQUE   | L/100KM |
|-----------------|---------|----------|----------|----------|---------|
| 2.5i-S Premium  | 479 000 | b4/2.5   | 129/5800 | 235/4000 | 7.3     |
| 2.0D Premium    | 529 000 | b4/2.0TD | 110/3600 | 350/1600 | 6.3     |
| 3.6 R-S Premium | 529 000 | b6/3.6   | 191/6000 | 350/4400 | 9.9     |

**Service plan:** 3 year / 75 000km. **Fuel tank:**

70 litres. **Average sales per month:** 24. >> The new Outback continues to build on the reputation of the models that came before it. It's still practical, safe, luxurious and very well built. The new model's styling is a massive leap forward, but Subaru has played it safe in the engines department by carrying over all of the powertrains used in the previous model. **LW choice:** 2.0-litre turbodiesel CVT. **Also look at:** Audi A4 allroad, Volvo V60 Cross Country / XC70



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| JIMNY    | PRICE   | ENGINE | POWER   | TORQUE   | L/100KM |
|----------|---------|--------|---------|----------|---------|
| 1.3      | 228 400 | 4/1.3  | 63/6000 | 110/4100 | 7.2     |
| 1.3 auto | 243 400 | 4/1.3  | 63/6000 | 110/4100 | 7.6     |

**Service plan:** 4 years / 60 000 km. **Fuel tank:** 40 litres.

**Average sales per month:** 105. >> The Suzuki Jimny has a low-range transfer case, low weight, and a relatively powerful new 1.3-litre engine. Okay, so the Jimny is small, and it doesn't really enjoy long-distance trips. But, thanks to its size it makes light work of just about any 4x4 track. It is an economical runabout. It's luxurious and safe. Quality is good. We like it. A lot. Ground clearance is pegged at only 190mm, but thanks to the excellent approach and departure angles, small and nimble size, and tight turning circle, this won't affect the Jimny as much as it would a bigger vehicle. It can make a pukka 4x4 costing four times as much look rather silly on a tight 4x4 track. The only thing that may stop it is an axle twister – the Jimny does not have a rear diff lock or limited slip diff. **LW choice:** The Jimny, please! **Also look at:** Daihatsu Terios Off-road



| SX4                  | PRICE   | ENGINE | POWER   | TORQUE   | L/100KM |
|----------------------|---------|--------|---------|----------|---------|
| 1.6 GL               | 268 900 | 4/1.6  | 86/6000 | 156/4000 | 5.8     |
| 1.6 GLX              | 298 900 | 4/1.6  | 86/6000 | 156/4000 | 5.8     |
| 1.6 GLX auto         | 321 900 | 4/1.6  | 86/6000 | 156/4000 | 5.8     |
| 1.6 GLX AllGrip      | 322 900 | 4/1.6  | 86/6000 | 156/4000 | 6.2     |
| 1.6 GLX AllGrip auto | 344 900 | 4/1.6  | 86/6000 | 156/4000 | 6.2     |

**Service plan:** 3 years / 90 000 km **Fuel tank:**

47 litres. **Average sales per month:** 26 >> The all-new Suzuki SX4 has landed, and it is quite a different vehicle to the outgoing model. It is sleeker, more refined, and quite a bit bigger. Overall, this is an impressive compact SUV that is well priced. It has loads of infotainment features, and even boasts top-notch safety features such as seven airbags. It is available with a CVT gearbox, but the manual is the one to go for. You probably won't be needing that 4WD system either, so the basic 4x2 model with the manual shifter should be your pick. Great value for money! **LW choice:** GLX manual. **Also look at:** Ford EcoSport, Mitsubishi ASX, Nissan Qashqai, Opel Mokka, Peugeot 2008, Fiat 500X, Honda HR-V



| GRAND VITARA    | PRICE   | ENGINE | POWER    | TORQUE   | L/100KM |
|-----------------|---------|--------|----------|----------|---------|
| 2.4 Dune        | 331 900 | 4/2.4  | 122/6000 | 225/4000 | 8.9     |
| 2.4 Dune auto   | 346 900 | 4/2.4  | 122/6000 | 225/4000 | 9.9     |
| 2.4 Summit      | 401 900 | 4/2.4  | 122/6000 | 225/4000 | 8.9     |
| 2.4 Summit auto | 417 900 | 4/2.4  | 122/6000 | 225/4000 | 9.9     |

**Service plan:** 6 years / 90 000 km. **Fuel tank:** 66 litres. **Average sales per month:** 13. >> If compact SUVs were soccer players, the Grand Vitara would be English legend David Beckham. Just like Beckham, the Vitara is not only a trendy looker, but

also surprisingly capable in its application. The Suzuki permanent 4x4 system transfers the engine's urge to both front and rear wheels via a torque-sensitive, limited-slip centre differential. The system offers three driving modes: 4H, 4H-Lock, and 4L-Lock. Add 206mm ground clearance, good wheel travel, tough 4x4 underpinnings and a mighty impressive traction control system, and the Grand Vitara can go places where few small SUVs will dare. **LW choice:** 2.4 Summit. **Also look at:** Subaru Forester, Nissan Qashqai / X-Trail, Toyota RAV4



**TATA** Phone: 0861 828272 Website: [www.tatasa.co.za](http://www.tatasa.co.za)

| XENON       | PRICE   | ENGINE  | POWER    | TORQUE   | L/100KM |
|-------------|---------|---------|----------|----------|---------|
| 3.0L DLE    | 199 995 | 4/3.0TD | 85/3000  | 300/1800 | 10.0    |
| XT 2.2L     | 259 995 | 4/2.2TD | 110/4000 | 320/1500 | 9.0     |
| XT 2.2L 4x4 | 294 995 | 4/2.2TD | 110/4000 | 320/1500 | 9.0     |

**Service plan:** None for 3.0L; 5 years / 75 000 km

for 2.2L and XT **Fuel tank:** 65 litres for 3.0L / 2.2L;

70 for XT. **Average sales per month:** 16. >> What

a difference the new, more modern 2.2-litre engine has made to the Xenon. The latest Xenon, now with about 300 improvements over the original model, is not perfect, but it can go the off-road mile, it can gobble up open-road kilometres, and it can handle the city slog too. It just does it in a less refined manner than say, a Hilux. But considering that it sells for half the price of a new Hilux... who needs refinement, anyway? **LW choice:** 2.2 4x4. **Also look at:** GWM Steed, Mahindra Scorpio Pik-Up, a used double-cab



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| HILUX                             | PRICE   | ENGINE  | POWER    | TORQUE   | L/100KM |
|-----------------------------------|---------|---------|----------|----------|---------|
| Xtra Cab                          |         |         |          |          |         |
| 2.5D-4D SRX                       | 315 500 | 4/2.5TD | 75/3600  | 260/1600 | n/a     |
| 3.0D-4D Raider Legend 45          | 395 000 | 4/3.0TD | 120/3400 | 343/1400 | n/a     |
| 3.0D-4D 4x4 Raider Legend 45      | 454 500 | 4/3.0TD | 120/3400 | 343/1400 | n/a     |
| Double Cab                        |         |         |          |          |         |
| 2.7 Raider Legend 45              | 399 100 | 4/2.7   | 118/5200 | 241/3800 | 10.8    |
| 2.5D-4D 4x4 SRX                   | 421 300 | 4/2.5TD | 75/3600  | 260/1600 | 8.7     |
| 2.5D-4D Raider Legend 45          | 434 900 | 4/2.5TD | 106/3400 | 343/1600 | 8.0     |
| 3.0D-4D Raider Legend 45          | 462 900 | 4/3.0TD | 120/3400 | 343/1400 | 8.6     |
| 3.0D-4D Raider Legend 45 auto     | 477 300 | 4/3.0TD | 120/3400 | 343/1400 | 9.7     |
| 3.0D-4D 4x4 Raider Legend 45      | 523 300 | 4/3.0TD | 120/3400 | 343/1400 | 8.6     |
| 3.0D-4D 4x4 Raider Legend 45 auto | 537 800 | 4/3.0TD | 120/3400 | 343/1400 | 9.7     |
| 4.0 V6 Raider Legend 45           | 476 400 | V6/4.0  | 175/5200 | 376/3800 | 12.0    |
| 4.0 V6 4x4 Raider Legend 45       | 563 900 | V6/4.0  | 175/5200 | 376/3800 | 12.0    |



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**Service plan:** 5 years / 90 000km

**Fuel tank:** 80 litres. **Average sales per month:**

1 001 (July). >> The Hilux, now available in both Dakar and Legend45 guise, continues to be a big seller. Although the engines remain the same, the top double cab models now vitally get vehicle dynamic control (VDC) and traction control, to counter the VW Amarok and Ford Ranger. Whether it will keep on to sales remains to be seen, but the 4x4 versions have rear diff locks and low-range gearing, making it even more capable than before. **LW choice:** 3.0 D-4D double cab 4x4 Raider. **Also look at:** Volkswagen Amarok, Nissan Navara, Ford Ranger, Isuzu KB



| RAV4           | PRICE   | ENGINE  | POWER    | TORQUE   | L/100KM |
|----------------|---------|---------|----------|----------|---------|
| 2.0 GX         | 317 800 | 4/2.0   | 107/6200 | 187/3600 | 7.7     |
| 2.0 GX auto    | 328 800 | 4/2.0   | 107/6200 | 187/3600 | 7.4     |
| 2.2D-4D AWD GX | 399 200 | 4/2.2TD | 110/3600 | 340/2000 | 5.6     |
| 2.2D-4D AWD VX | 480 800 | 4/2.2TD | 110/3600 | 340/2000 | 6.5     |
| 2.5 AWD VX     | 450 700 | 4/2.5   | 132/6000 | 233/4100 | 8.5     |

**Service plan:** 5 years / 90 000 km

**Fuel tank:** 60 litres. **Average sales per month:**

413. >> The RAV4 has grown up a lot since it was first launched in 1994, giving birth to the entire compact SUV market. Now it's been restyled with a much anticipated update, and a wider price range that should open it open to a new range of buyers. **LW choice:** 2.2D-4D AWD GX. **Also look at:** Honda CR-V, Nissan Qashqai / X-Trail



| FORTUNER                 | PRICE   | ENGINE  | POWER    | TORQUE   | L/100KM |
|--------------------------|---------|---------|----------|----------|---------|
| 2.5D-4D                  | 399 500 | 4/2.5TD | 106/3400 | 343/1600 | 8.0     |
| 2.5D-4D auto             | 413 300 | 4/2.5TD | 106/3400 | 343/1600 | 9.1     |
| 3.0D-4D                  | 480 000 | 4/3.0TD | 120/3400 | 343/1400 | 8.5     |
| 3.0D-4D auto             | 493 600 | 4/3.0TD | 120/3400 | 343/1400 | 9.4     |
| 3.0D-4D Limited          | 480 000 | 4/3.0TD | 120/3400 | 343/1400 | 8.5     |
| 3.0D-4D Limited auto     | 493 600 | 4/3.0TD | 120/3400 | 343/1400 | 9.4     |
| 3.0D-4D 4x4              | 534 400 | 4/3.0TD | 120/3400 | 343/1400 | 8.6     |
| 3.0D-4D 4x4 auto         | 548 300 | 4/3.0TD | 120/3400 | 343/1400 | 9.8     |
| 3.0D-4D 4x4 Limited      | 534 400 | 4/3.0TD | 120/3400 | 343/1400 | 8.6     |
| 3.0D-4D 4x4 Limited auto | 548 300 | 4/3.0TD | 120/3400 | 343/1400 | 9.8     |
| 4.0 V6                   | 513 000 | V6/4    | 175/5200 | 376/3800 | 12.7    |
| 4.0 V6 4x4               | 567 200 | V6/4    | 175/5200 | 376/3800 | 13.0    |

**Service plan:** 5 years / 90 000 km **Fuel tank:**

80 litres. **Average sales per month:** 570.

>> SA's best-selling SUV has received an epic makeover, and more recently a spec upgrade - with black interiors! The best news for Joe Soap is the introduction of an entry-level 2.5D-4D 4x2 model. They may look new, but under the skin the Fortuner 4x4 models are still a rough and ready 4x4s. Thanks to its rugged Hilux underpinnings, it is near unstoppable in most conditions. Even the 4x2 models with standard rear diff lock will get farther on a tough off-road route than some other 4x4 vehicles. **LW choice:** 2.5D-4D 4x2. **Also look at:** Chevrolet Trailblazer, Land Rover Discovery Sport, Mitsubishi Pajero Sport



| LAND CRUISER 70 SERIES         | PRICE   | ENGINE   | POWER    | TORQUE   | L/100KM |
|--------------------------------|---------|----------|----------|----------|---------|
| 79 4.0 V6 double cab           | 548 900 | V6/4.0   | 170/5200 | 360/3800 | 13.6    |
| 79 4.2D double cab             | 575 700 | 6/4.2D   | 96/3800  | 285/2200 | 13.0    |
| 79 4.5D-4D LX V8 double cab    | 646 500 | V8/4.5TD | 151/3400 | 430/1200 | 11.6    |
| 76 4.5D-4D LX V8 station wagon | 661 100 | V8/4.5TD | 151/3400 | 430/1200 | 11.6    |

**Service plan:** None **Fuel tank:** 90+90 litres for

s/cab and wagon; 130 litres for d/cab and station wagon. **Average sales per month:** 360. >> The old-school Cruiser range is supremely robust, without any fancy electronic gizmos. Even though it is basic, you do get some luxuries like air-con, a navigation and entertainment system, and power windows. The long-awaited 79 double cab has now also landed, as has the much anticipated V8 D-4D motor. **LW choice:** 4.0 V6 double cab! And, um, shares in an oil company! **Also look at:** Land Rover Defender, Jeep Wrangler, Cruiser in a different colour.



| FJ CRUISER       | PRICE   | ENGINE | POWER    | TORQUE   | L/100KM |
|------------------|---------|--------|----------|----------|---------|
| FJ Cruiser       | 526 800 | V6/4.0 | 200/5600 | 380/4400 | 11.4    |
| FJ Sport Cruiser | 552 900 | V6/4.0 | 200/5600 | 380/4400 | 11.4    |

**Service plan:** 5 years / 90 000 km

**Fuel tank:** 72 + 87 litres **Average sales per**

**month:** 21. >> The retro-styled Cruiser not only looks good but also has real-world 4x4 ability, punchy performance from the 200kW V6 engine and a decently refined on-road ride too. With 245mm ground clearance, a pukka transfer case, ATRAC traction control, a rear differential lock, 700mm wading depth, excellent approach and departure angles and a 200 kW V6 engine, the FJ is amazingly capable off-road. **LW choice:** FJ Cruiser by Rob Green Motorsport. **Also look at:** Jeep Wrangler, Land Rover Defender 90



| LAND CRUISER PRADO | PRICE   | ENGINE  | POWER    | TORQUE   | L/100KM |
|--------------------|---------|---------|----------|----------|---------|
| 3.0DT TX           | 700 600 | 4/3.0TD | 120/3400 | 400/1600 | 8.5     |
| 4.0 VX             | 797 900 | V6/4    | 202/5600 | 381/4400 | 11.5    |
| 3.0DT VX           | 800 200 | 4/3.0TD | 120/3400 | 400/1600 | 8.5     |

**Service plan:** 5 years / 90 000 km. **Fuel tank:** 87 + 63

(150) litres. **Average sales per month:** 164. >> It's comfortable, luxurious, should be reliable (it's a Toyota), and has all the 4x4 technology anyone could ask for. The powerful diesel engine finally fixes a Prado weakness, but it is still outgunned by its rivals. Like anything with a Land Cruiser badge, the Prado is a real 4x4. Permanent four-wheel drive, low-range, centre and rear diff locks, traction control, Hill Start Assist, Crawl Control and Multi-terrain. **LW choice:** 4.0 V6 TX. **Also look at:** Mitsubishi Pajero, Nissan Patrol, Land Rover Discovery, VW Touareg, Volvo XC90



| LAND CRUISER 200 | PRICE     | ENGINE   | POWER    | TORQUE   | L/100KM |
|------------------|-----------|----------|----------|----------|---------|
| 4.6 V8 VX        | 1 079 800 | V8/4.6   | 227/5500 | 439/3400 | 13.9    |
| 4.5D-4D VX       | 1 108 800 | V8/4.5TD | 173/3200 | 615/1800 | 10.3    |

**Service plan:** 5 years / 90 000 km

**Fuel tank:** 93 litres. **Average sales per month:** 31

The big daddy of Toyota's Cruiser family has grown from a highly capable 4x4 into a premium luxury 4x4, and just received a features upgrade. It's still highly capable, but the big Cruiser now has a host of fancy electronics and gizmos. It is engineered to withstand the harshest of 4x4 conditions, despite being a five-star luxury vehicle. It is indeed capable of doing the hard yards. It has low range, a lockable centre diff and crawl mode for low-speed driving. But even with all the gadgets, it has lost some of its "let's head out into the bush" attraction. **LW choice:** 4.5D-4D VX. **Also look at:** Infiniti QX80, Lexus LX, Land Rover Range Rover, Mercedes-Benz GL



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| CROSS CADDY | PRICE   | ENGINE  | POWER   | TORQUE   | L/100KM |
|-------------|---------|---------|---------|----------|---------|
| 2.0TDI      | 343 300 | 4/2.0TD | 81/4200 | 250/1750 | 5.7     |

**Service/Maintenance plan:** Optional

**Fuel tank:** 60 litres. **Average sales per month:** n/a.

>> The CrossCaddy hides its panel van roots very well. You get VW build quality, loads of equipment and sliding doors on both sides. It doesn't feel as big as other MPVs, but it's just as comfortable. The main weapon in its arsenal is the refined ride. It simply glides over bad surfaces. **LW choice:** Only one model. **Also look at:** Renault Duster



| TIGUAN                      | PRICE   | ENGINE  | POWER    | TORQUE   | L/100KM |
|-----------------------------|---------|---------|----------|----------|---------|
| 1.4TSI 90kW Trend&Fun       | 334 900 | 4/1.4T  | 90/5000  | 200/1500 | 6.5     |
| 1.4TSI 118kW Trend&Fun      | 371 200 | 4/1.4ST | 118/5800 | 240/1750 | 6.7     |
| 1.4TSI 118kW Trend&Fun auto | 387 200 | 4/1.4ST | 118/5800 | 240/1750 | 7.1     |
| 2.0TDI Trend&Fun            | 362 500 | 4/2.0TD | 81/2750  | 280/1750 | 5.3     |
| 2.0TDI 4Motion Trend&Fun    | 428 700 | 4/2.0TD | 103/4200 | 320/1750 | 6.5     |
| 2.0TDI 4Motion Track&Field  | 454 000 | 4/2.0TD | 103/4200 | 320/1750 | 6.5     |
| 2.0TDI 4Motion Sport&Style  | 468 100 | 4/2.0TD | 103/4200 | 320/1750 | 6.5     |
| 2.0TSI 4Motion Sport&Style  | 490 400 | 4/2.0T  | 155/5100 | 280/1700 | 8.8     |

**Maintenance plan:** 5 years / 60 000 km

**Fuel tank:** 64 litres. **Average sales per month:**

221. >> The baby Touareg competes in the compact SUV segment, which has recently become very competitive. There's still a model for just about every need, and the Blue Motion models offer outstanding fuel consumption. The Tiguan is still a great all-rounder. With no low range, and a ground clearance of 200mm, the Tiguan is still a soft-roader. The







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175/50/13" - Yokohama - R850  
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175/70/13" - Sava - R425  
165/80/13" - Sava - R370

175/65/14" - Dunlop - R480  
175/65/14" - Pirelli - R570  
175/70/14" - Kenda - R590  
185/60/14" - Dunlop - R530  
185/60/14" - Pirelli - R650  
185/65/14" - Dunlop - R560

**15 & 16" TYRES**

185/65/15" - Dunlop - R650  
195/50/15" - Sava - R540  
195/50/15" - Dunlop - R620  
195/50/15" - Pirelli - R740  
195/50/15" - Yokohama - R680  
195/55/15" - Dunlop - R680  
195/60/15" - Pirelli - R750  
195/60/15" - Dunlop - R670  
195/65/15" - Dunlop - R640  
205/60/15" - Dunlop - R730

195/45/16" - Wanli - R720  
205/45/16" - Kenda - R740  
205/55/16" - Yokohama - R795  
205/55/16" - Dunlop - R780  
225/55/16" - Dunlop - R930

**17" & 18" TYRES**

205/45/16" - Kenda - R740  
205/40/17" - Wanli - R620  
205/40/17" - Dunlop - R695  
205/40/17" - Pirelli - R920  
205/40/17" - Yokohama - R895  
215/45/17" - Kenda - R780  
225/45/17" - Accelera - R895  
225/45/17" - Yokohama - R1150  
235/45/17" - Wanli - R890

215/35/18" - Accelera - R980  
225/40/18" - Wanli - R895  
225/40/18" - Dunlop - R950  
225/40/18" - Yokohama - R1295  
235/40/18" - Kenda - R1450  
255/35/18" - Wanli - R1150

**4x4, 19" & 20"**

225/35/19" - Yokohama - R1695  
235/35/19" - Achilles - R1295  
235/35/19" - Yokohama - R1695  
265/30/19" - Accelera - R1900  
225/30/20" - Wanli - R1295

**Bakkie and 4x4/SUV Tyres**  
195R14" - Wanli - R780  
215/15" - Dunlop - R1200  
195R15C - Dunlop - R1050  
235/65/17" - Wanli - R1295  
275/40/20" - Achilles - R1850  
275/45/20" - Achilles - R1850

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Track&Field versions, which come with underbody protection, are the more rugged models with improved clearance, approach and departure angles. **LW choice:** 1.4TSI 4Motion Trend&Fun. **Also look at:** Toyota RAV4, Subaru Forester, Nissan Qashqai

| AMAROK                         | PRICE   | ENGINE  | POWER    | TORQUE   | L/100KM |
|--------------------------------|---------|---------|----------|----------|---------|
| 2.0TDI Trendline               | 424 300 | 4/2.0TD | 103/3500 | 340/1600 | 7.6     |
| 2.0TDI Trendline 4Motion       | 475 300 | 4/2.0TD | 103/3500 | 340/1600 | 7.7     |
| 2.0BiTDI Highline              | 454 700 | 4/2.0TD | 132/4000 | 400/1500 | 7.9     |
| 2.0BiTDI Highline auto         | 472 200 | 4/2.0TD | 132/4000 | 420/1750 | 8.2     |
| 2.0BiTDI Highline 4Motion      | 505 700 | 4/2.0TD | 132/4000 | 400/1500 | 8.0     |
| 2.0BiTDI Highline 4Motion auto | 523 200 | 4/2.0TD | 132/4000 | 420/1750 | 8.3     |

**Service plan:** 5 years / 90 000 km **Fuel tank:** 80 litres. **Average sales per month:** 154 (July).

» The big German bakkie has been upsetting the Ford and Toyota fans by winning awards left right and centre, and its SUV-like cabin aim it squarely at the leisure market. It comes with ESP, Hill Start/hill descent, off-road ABS, traction control, electronic differential lock, a mechanical locking differential, and even a low-range transfer case. The Amarok can go the off-road mile, despite its size, and its towing capabilities have outshone the rest. The automatic Highline controversially has an eight-speed 'box with what is essentially a crawl gear, and no low-range 'box. **LW choice:** 2.0BiTDI 4Motion. **Also look at:** Toyota Hilux, Nissan Navara, Ford Ranger, Isuzu KB.



| CALIFORNIA BEACH      | PRICE   | ENGINE  | POWER    | TORQUE   | L/100KM |
|-----------------------|---------|---------|----------|----------|---------|
| 2.0BiTDI 4Motion      | 714 400 | 4/2.0TD | 132/4000 | 400/1500 | 8.4     |
| 2.0BiTDI 4Motion auto | 732 900 | 4/2.0TD | 132/4000 | 400/1500 | 8.8     |

**Maintenance plan:** 5 years / 60 000 km

**Fuel tank:** 80 litres. **Average sales per month:** n/a.

» Okay, this isn't your typical 4x4, but for certain outdoor enthusiasts, the VW California Beach is sure to make a lot of sense. If you're one of those "adventure types" who climb and surf and bike and hike, the California Beach might be your ultimate outdoor vehicle. It is spacious – spacious enough, literally, to camp in, and it has VW's 4Motion AWD system and an electronic differential lock, so it can go just about anywhere your adventures lead you. Its show-stopping party trick is a pop-up roof that turns the Kombi into a little house. **LW Choice:** 4Motion auto.



| TOUAREG          | PRICE     | ENGINE   | POWER    | TORQUE   | L/100KM |
|------------------|-----------|----------|----------|----------|---------|
| V6 Elegance      | 723 300   | V6/3.6   | 206/6200 | 360/3200 | 10.9    |
| V6 TDI Luxury    | 808 400   | V6/3.0TD | 180/4000 | 550/2000 | 7.2     |
| V6 TDI Escape    | 834 400   | V6/3.0TD | 180/4000 | 550/2000 | 7.3     |
| V8 TDI Executive | 1 010 400 | V8/4.1TD | 250/4000 | 800/1750 | 9.1     |

**Maintenance plan:** 5 years / 100 000 km

**Fuel tank:** 100 litres. **Average sales per month:** 37.

» Filling the top-dog position in the line-up is a 250kW/800Nm 4.2-litre V8 TDI. A new eight-speed auto gearbox is standard – across the range. The 4Motion version gets permanent 4x4 with a limited-slip Torsen centre diff and electronic diff locks (EDS) on all four wheels, but no low-range gearing. The V6 TDI model is available in Escape guise, which adds low-range gearing, increased ground clearance, a locking centre diff and an optional rear diff. **LW choice:** V6 TDI. **Also look at:** Audi Q7, BMW X5, Infiniti QX70, Land Rover Discovery / Range Rover Sport, Lexus RX, Mercedes-Benz GLE, Toyota Land Cruiser Prado, Volvo XC90



**VOLVO Phone:** 012 450 4901 **Website:** www.volvocars.com/za

| V40 CROSS COUNTRY | PRICE   | ENGINE  | POWER    | TORQUE   | L/100KM |
|-------------------|---------|---------|----------|----------|---------|
| T4 Momentum       | 386 700 | 4/2.0T  | 140/4700 | 300/1300 | 5.5     |
| T4 Momentum auto  | 405 600 | 4/2.0T  | 140/4700 | 300/1300 | 5.6     |
| D3 Momentum       | 423 400 | 4/2.0TD | 110/3750 | 320/1750 | 4.0     |
| D4 Momentum       | 439 100 | 4/2.0TD | 140/4250 | 400/1750 | 4.3     |
| T5 AWD Momentum   | 474 800 | 4/2.0T  | 180/5500 | 350/1500 | 6.4     |

**Maintenance plan:** 5 years / 100 000 km

**Fuel tank:** 57 litres. **Average sales per month:** 28.

» The low-slung V40 Cross Country is an interesting alternative to all those crossovers out there at the moment. It's obviously not a hardcore 4x4, but there is the option of AWD in the top-end T5 Excel model, so the V40 can deal with a bad dirt road. Moreover, the V40 Cross Country looks good, is comfy and offers tons of packing space. Pricing is very



competitive, and you even get a five-year maintenance plan as well. If you want a 4x4 that can tackle trails, this isn't the vehicle for you, but if you want a fun and practical ever-day car, the V40 is worth a look. **LW choice:** D4 Excel. **Also look at:** Audi A4 allroad, Mercedes-Benz GLA, BMW X1, MINI Countryman, Subaru XV

| V60 CROSS COUNTRY | PRICE   | ENGINE  | POWER    | TORQUE   | L/100KM |
|-------------------|---------|---------|----------|----------|---------|
| D4 AWD Momentum   | 499 900 | 5/2.4TD | 140/4000 | 420/1500 | 5.7     |
| T5 AWD Momentum   | 533 500 | 5/2.5T  | 187/5400 | 360/1800 | 8.5     |

**Maintenance plan:** 5 years / 100 000 km

**Fuel tank:** 68 litres. **Average sales per month:** 6. » Like its smaller sibling, the V40 Cross Country, the V60 Cross Country offers an alternative to modern crossovers and compact SUVs. It still has AWD and a decent amount of ground clearance, but isn't designed for hardcore off-road duty. The V60 is more spacious than the V40 – offering a very impressive amount of luggage space – and boasts some truly wonderful styling. If you want an estate, but also want AWD and loads of space, the V60 Cross Country is worth looking at. It will undoubtedly make you stand out from the crowd. **LW Choice:** D4 AWD. **Also look at:** Audi A4 allroad, Subaru Outback



| XC70               | PRICE   | ENGINE  | POWER    | TORQUE   | L/100KM |
|--------------------|---------|---------|----------|----------|---------|
| D5 AWD Inscription | 505 000 | 5/2.4TD | 162/4000 | 440/1500 | 5.8     |

**Maintenance plan:** 5 years / 100 000 km

**Fuel tank:** 70 litres. **Average sales per month:** 4.

» The Volvo XC70 is more a station wagon on stilts than it is an SUV, but it's more capable than one might think. The interior is commodious and the diesel engine is powerful and frugal in equal measure. **LW choice:** Only one model in the line-up. **Also look at:** Audi A4 allroad, Subaru Outback



| XC60            | PRICE   | ENGINE  | POWER    | TORQUE   | L/100KM |
|-----------------|---------|---------|----------|----------|---------|
| T5 Momentum     | 561 200 | 4/2.0T  | 180/5500 | 350/1500 | 6.7     |
| D4 Momentum     | 565 800 | 4/2.0TD | 140/4250 | 400/1750 | 4.7     |
| D5 AWD Momentum | 627 500 | 5/2.4TD | 162/4000 | 440/1500 | 5.7     |
| T6 Momentum     | 634 900 | 4/2.0ST | 225/5700 | 400/2100 | 7.0     |

**Maintenance plan:** 5 years / 100 000 km

**Fuel tank:** 70 litres. **Average sales per month:** 52.

» Touted as the safest car in the world (and it probably is), the XC60 has moved the SUV goalposts for the Swedish brand. It's more modern and good-looking, yet still features all the qualities Volvo is renowned for. With a 230mm ground clearance, the XC60 is actually a competent off-roader, and you might find yourself heading towards a more challenging 4x4 track after the Swede dispatches of the soft-roader route without working hard at all. It has no low range, but Volvo's Instant Traction system sorts the traction details out. Hill descent control is also standard. **LW choice:** T6. **Also look at:** Subaru Forester, BMW X3, Audi Q5, Mercedes GLC, Lexus NX, Land Rover Discovery Sport.



| XC90                        | PRICE     | ENGINE   | POWER    | TORQUE   | L/100KM |
|-----------------------------|-----------|----------|----------|----------|---------|
| D4 Momentum                 | 804 000   | 4/2.0TD  | 140/4250 | 400/1750 | 5.2     |
| D5 AWD Momentum             | 853 200   | 4/2.0TD  | 165/4250 | 470/1750 | 5.8     |
| T5 AWD Momentum             | 827 400   | 4/2.0T   | 187/5500 | 350/1500 | 7.6     |
| T6 AWD Momentum             | 867 000   | 4/2.0ST  | 235/5700 | 400/2200 | 8.0     |
| T8 Twin Engine AWD Momentum | 1 005 100 | 4/2.0STe | 300e     | 640e     | 2.1     |

**Maintenance plan:** 5 years / 100 000 km

**Fuel tank:** 71 litres for D4 to T6; 50 for T8.

**Average sales per month:** 15.

» The XC90 is available only with four-cylinder engines, which is a first in this segment. It is, however, not down on power compared to its rivals and it will likely set new standards in fuel consumption and passenger safety in this segment. We haven't driven it yet, but it will likely be the new luxury SUV benchmark. **LW choice:** D5 AWD. **Also look at:** Audi Q7, BMW X5, Infiniti QX70, Land Rover Discovery / Range Rover Sport, Lexus RX, Mercedes GLE, Toyota Land Cruiser Prado, Porsche Cayenne, Volkswagen Touareg.



**Average sales per month:** n/a: no report on sales figures. **L/100km:** Average consumption as per manufacturer. **Prices include** CO<sub>2</sub> tax where applicable. **Model, price and spec data supplied by duoporta.** Data subject to change. Prices correct at time of going to press. Sales figures for LCVs supplied by Lightstone Auto.






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